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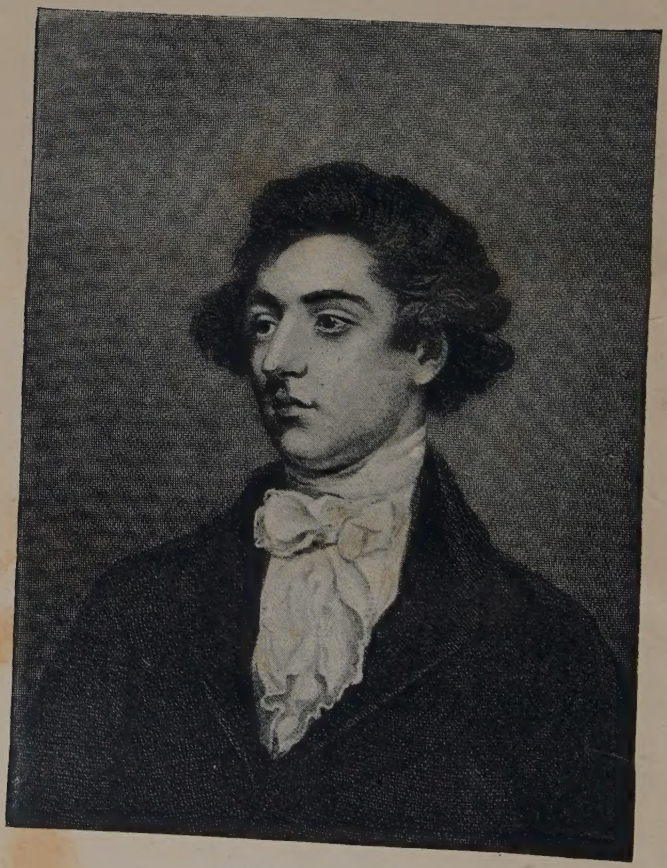

WILLIAM BECKFORD.

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Edited by G. T. BETTANY, M.A., B.Sc.

THE HISTORY OF THE CALIPH VATHEK;

AND

EUROPEAN TRAVELS.

BY

WILLIAM BECKFORD.

WITH A PORTRAIT, FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS, AND BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

WARD, LOCK AND CO.,
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1891.

INTRODUCTION.

THE inheritance of wealth destroys more greatness than it stimulates. In spite of his brilliant successes in literature, William Beckford, the author of "Vathek," is an example of genius marred by wealth. Had he been left with only a moderate competence, he might have become one of the brightest stars of imaginative literature. The youth who could write "Vathek" in French at twenty-two, and at the same time pen the striking travel-letters we here reprint, appeared capable of any success in the realm of literary expression. Whether the death of his wife, Lady Margaret Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Aboyne, after only three years of married life, had anything to do with his subsequent lapse into the somewhat misanthropic connoisseur and collector who astonished England by the Oriental magnificence he gathered round him at Fonthill, we cannot tell. But he never fulfilled the promise of his youth, and throughout his lifetime was best known as an eccentric lover of magnificence, shrouded in mystery which titillated while it baffled vulgar curiosity.

The Beckfords were an old Gloucestershire family, whose fallen fortunes were restored in the middle of the seventeenth century by Peter Beckford, who settled in Jamaica and became a wealthy planter. His son Peter was lieutenant-governor and commander-in-chief of the island under William III. His

grandson William Beckford, in addition to inheriting a largely increased property in Jamaica, was a notable London merchant, M.P. for the city in 1754 and Lord Mayor in 1762-3. He was intimately associated with John Wilkes, of "North Briton" fame; and Beckford's saying that under the House of Hanover Englishmen for the first time had been able to be free, and determined to be free, gives us the key to his son's remarkable freedom from conventional restraints, and his power of judging with an unprejudiced eye. His boldness of speech to George III. on a historic occasion in 1770, the year of his death, was the prelude to his son's similar boldness in criticizing the idols of popular applause.

William Beckford the younger, born at Fonthill on September 29th, 1759, inherited, after a long minority, a hundred thousand a year, and a million in cash. Privately educated, he grew up wilful, extravagant, and capricious. The elder Pitt pronounced him "all air and fire," and warned him against reading the "Arabian Nights;" very fruitlessly, as is evident to readers of "Vathek." In his seventeenth year he wrote a "History of Extraordinary Painters," in mockery of the "Lives of Flemish Painters," and describing many mythical paintings as the works of "Og, King of Basan," etc.

In 1777-8 he continued his education at Geneva, and in 1780 and 1782 he visited the Low Countries and Italy, writing the series of letters which, with a description of a visit to the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse in 1778, he printed in a quarto volume in 1783, under the title of "Dreams, Waking Thoughts, and Incidents; in a Series of Letters from Various Parts of Europe." According to Redding, five hundred copies were printed; but before publication timid friends represented to him that the fancy and imagination of the work would prejudice the author's success in the House of Commons, and that the contempt he had expressed for field sports would ruin him with the country gentlemen. Their advice prevailed, and all

the copies were destroyed, except six, one of which is now in the British Museum. On examining it, we find that when Beckford finally published his "Italy, Spain, and Portugal" in 1834, he suppressed a number of passages which are among the most imaginative in the volume. He seems to have obliterated those passages of pure fancy, which, judging from the original title-page, had then occupied the first place in his mind. The book began characteristically with a dream, very unlike the style of a matter-of-fact eighteenth-century traveller.

During the same year, in 1781 or 1782, he wrote "Vathek" in French in a single sitting of three days and two nights, only stopping at intervals for refreshment. Naturally such an effort brought on a severe illness. An English translation, "sufficiently idiomatic to have entirely eclipsed and to have frequently been taken for the original," was published anonymously and surreptitiously in 1784. It is understood to have been made by the Rev. S. Henley, Rector of Rendlesham, who also added a series of notes, many of which are now out of date and others are unnecessary. They are not reprinted here, for no "notes" are needed to enhance the pleasure of reading this romance. The original French form was published at Paris and at Lausanne in 1787, the latter edition only bearing the author's name. He married in 1783, and lived with his wife in Switzerland till her death in May 1786. She left him two daughters, one of whom became Duchess of Hamilton; the other married Colonel Orde against her father's will, and he never forgave her. After his wife's death, Beckford visited Portugal, one result being his letters from Portugal, here given as first published in 1834. After passing through Spain, he spent a considerable period in Paris, and was present at the storming of the Bastille in 1789. Visiting Lausanne a few years later, he bought the library of Gibbon the historian, and shut himself up like a hermit to read it. In 1794 he again

visited Portugal, inhabiting the retreat at Cintra afterwards described by Byron in the following beautiful lines :

> " There thou, too, Vathek ! England's wealthiest son,
> Once formed thy Paradise, as not aware
> When wanton Wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,—
> Meek Peace voluptuous lures was ever wont to shun.
>
> Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan,
> Beneath yon mountain's ever-beauteous brow :
> But now, as if a thing unblest by Man,
> Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou !
> Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
> To halls deserted, portals gaping wide :
> Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how
> Vain are the pleasaunces on earth supplied ;
> Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle tide !" *

On this occasion he wrote his remarkable account of the monasteries of Alcobaça and Batalha.

After his return from Portugal, although he was a Member of Parliament for many years, he gave himself almost entirely to collecting books, curiosities, and objects of art. In 1796 he settled down on his paternal estate of Fonthill in Wiltshire, and rebuilt the mansion on a grand scale. Becoming dissatisfied with it, he pulled it down and built another, more splendid, on a different site. He resolved to add to it a tower three hundred feet high, and hundreds of workmen were employed day and night to finish it. It was built too quickly, and fell down ; another succeeded it, but this also fell after Beckford had left Fonthill. The public, excluded from the sight, were feasted with glowing accounts of its magnificence, and of the proprietor surveying its construction with satisfaction on the coldest December nights. The magnificent grounds were surrounded with a lofty wall, which shut out tourists and sportsmen alike. Here Beckford shut himself up for twenty years with his doctor, steward, and French priest, and his absorbing collections. In sixteen

* " Childe Harold," Canto I., Stanzas 22, 23.

years he is said to have spent a quarter of a million upon Fonthill. Even Beckford's fortune was no unfailing resource; his extravagance, lawsuits, and the depreciation of the West Indian property so far diminished his income that he, in 1822, disposed of Fonthill and a great part of its contents to a self-made man, John Farquahar, for £330,000. The new owner sold the collections and furniture in 1823, the sale extending over thirty-seven days. Hazlitt, perhaps unduly prejudiced against Beckford, described Fonthill as "a desert of magnificence, a glittering waste of laborious idleness, a cathedral turned into a toy-shop, an immense museum of all that is most curious and costly, and at the same time most worthless, in the production of art and nature. Mr. Beckford," he went on, "has undoubtedly shown himself an industrious *bijoutier*, a prodigious virtuoso, an accomplished patron of unproductive labour, an enthusiastic collector of expensive trifles: the only proof of taste he has shown in this collection is his getting rid of it." But the library and the best pictures had been removed by Beckford to Lansdown Terrace, Bath, where he continued to collect as eagerly as before. He died on May 2nd, 1844, in his eighty-fifth year, and was buried beneath a tower he had built on Lansdown Hill, the surrounding grounds being afterwards given to Bath for a public cemetery by the Duchess of Hamilton.

By the suggestion of Dr. Garnett, of the British Museum, Beckford's earlier letters are here reprinted, with their occasional literary and grammatical blemishes as they stood, from a copy of the original unpublished quarto of 1783. One letter of great length, containing a contrast between the political and social state of England and the countries he had visited, is omitted, as it contains nothing of special interest except its evidence of Beckford's patriotism, of which we have scarcely any other proof. Those on Spain and Portugal are from the edition of 1834. We owe thanks also to Dr. Garnett for permission to quote some of his critical remarks on

Beckford from the *Universal Review*, September 1890, and the "Dictionary of National Biography." "As a literary figure," he writes, "Beckford occupies a remarkable position, an incarnation of the spirit of the eighteenth century writing in the yet unrecognized dawn of the nineteenth, flushed by emotions which he does not understand, and depicting the old courtly order of Europe on the eve of its dissolution. His character was patrician in everything but its want of repose and its insensibility to duty; too charitable to be called selfish, attached from caprice to animals, from habit to dependents, he was yet an absolute egotist. It never seemed to occur to him that his magnificent possessions in the West Indies entailed upon him the least responsibility."

"European literature has no Oriental fiction which impresses the imagination so powerfully and permanently as 'Vathek.' Portions of the story may be tedious or repulsive, but the whole combines two things most difficult of alliance—the fantastic and the sublime." The true Oriental spirit is undoubtedly manifested by the writer; but there is a certain unevenness in the story which makes one regret that Beckford did not write something in the same vein with powers disciplined by literary experience.* His "Letters" exhibit the man more completely in his waywardness, his frequent antagonism to things others admired, his insubjection to forms and conven tions, his frequent glow of feeling, of which he was half ashamed. "He is equally objective and subjective," writes Dr. Garnett; "his pictures, while brilliantly clear in outline, are yet steeped in the rich lines of his own peculiar feelings; he

* Byron writes of it: "'Vathek' was one of the tales I had a very early admiration of. For correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far surpasses all European imitations, and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation. As an Eastern tale, even 'Rasselas' must bow before it; his 'happy valley' will not bear a comparison with the 'Hall of Eblis.'"

approaches every object from its most picturesque site, and the measure of his eloquence is the interest with which it has actually inspired him. His colouring is magical; he paints nature like Salvator, and courts like Watteau." Yet he was but "the most brilliant amateur in English literature." He never went through that apprenticeship which, if it chills the first enthusiasms, imparts an artistic skill and constructive ability, which enable the experienced writer to surpass the achievements of untutored genius. As a record, however, of the countries of Western Europe on the eve of the most momentous of modern revolutions, combined with impressions of art and nature of the most vivid permanent interest, Beckford's "Letters" deserve to live in English literature.

G. T. B.

AUTHOR'S ADVERTISEMENT TO "ITALY, SPAIN, AND PORTUGAL," 1834.

SOME justly admired Authors having condescended to glean a few stray thoughts from these Letters, which have remained dormant a great many years, I have been at length emboldened to lay them before the public. Perhaps, as they happen to contain passages which persons of acknowledged taste have honoured with their notice, they may possibly be less unworthy of emerging from the shade into daylight than I imagined.

Most of these Letters were written in the bloom and heyday of youthful spirits and youthful confidence, at a period when the old order of things existed with all its picturesque pomps and absurdities; when Venice enjoyed her piombi and submarine dungeons; France her bastile; the Peninsula her holy Inquisition. To look back upon what is beginning to appear almost a fabulous era in the eyes of the modern children of light, is not unamusing or uninstructive; for, still better to appreciate the present, we should be led not unfrequently to recall the intellectual muzziness of the past.

But happily these pages are not crowded with such records: they are chiefly filled with delineations of landscape and those effects of natural phenomena which it is not in the power of revolutions or constitutions to alter or destroy.

A few moments snatched from the contemplation of political crimes, bloodshed, and treachery, are a few moments gained to all lovers of innocent illusion. Nor need the statesman or the scholar despise the occasional relaxation of light reading. When Jupiter and the great deities are represented by Homer as retiring from scenes of havoc and carnage to visit the blameless and quiet Ethiopians, who were the farthest removed of all nations, the Lord knows whither, at the very extremities of the ocean,—would they have given ear to manifestos or protocols? No, they would much rather have listened to the Tales of Mother Goose.

LONDON, *June 12th*, 1834.

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THE HISTORY OF THE CALIPH VATHEK.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST ENGLISH EDITION.

THE original of the following story, with some others of a similar kind, collected in the East by a man of letters, was communicated to the Editor above three years ago. The pleasure he received from the perusal of it induced him at that time to translate it. How far the copy may be a just representation, it becomes not him to determine. He presumes, however, to hope that, if the difficulty of accommodating our English idioms to the Arabic, preserving the correspondent tones of a diversified narration, and discriminating the nicer touches of character through the shades of foreign manners, be duly considered, a failure in some points will not preclude him from all claim to indulgence, especially if those images, sentiments, and passions, which, being independent of local peculiarities, may be expressed in every language, shall be found to retain their native energy in our own.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD FRENCH EDITION.

LES editions de Paris et de Lausanne, etant devenu extrêmement rares, j'ai consenti enfin a ce que l'on republîat à Londres ce petit ouvrage tel que je l'ai composé.

La traduction, comme on sçait, a paru avant l'original ; il est fort aisé de croire que ce n'etoit pas mon intention—des circonstances, peu intéressantes pour le public, en ont été la cause.

J'ai preparé quelques Episodes ; ils sont indiqués à la page 200,* comme faisant suite à Vathek—peut-être paraitront-ils un jour.

W. BECKFORD.

1 *Juin*, 1815.

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* These are the History of the two friendly Princes Alasi and Firouz, shut up in the Palace of Subterranean Fire.

History of Prince Backiarohk, imprisoned in the Palace of Subterranean Fire.

History of Prince Kahlah, and of the Princess Zulkais, shut up in the Palace of Subterranean Fire.

THE

HISTORY OF THE CALIPH VATHEK.

VATHEK, ninth Caliph of the race of the Abassides, was the son of Motassem, and the grandson of Haroun Al Raschid. From an early accession to the throne, and the talents he possessed to adorn it, his subjects were induced to expect that his reign would be long and happy. His figure was pleasing and majestic; but when he was angry one of his eyes became so terrible, that no person could bear to behold it, and the wretch upon whom it was fixed instantly fell backward, and sometimes expired. For fear, however, of depopulating his dominions and making his palace desolate, he but rarely gave way to his anger.

Being much addicted to women and the pleasures of the table, he sought by his affability to procure agreeable companions; and he succeeded the better as his generosity was unbounded, and his indulgences unrestrained, for he was by no means scrupulous, nor did he think, with the Caliph Omar Ben Abdalaziz, that it was necessary to make a hell of this world to enjoy Paradise in the next.

He surpassed in magnificence all his predecessors. The palace of Alkoremmi, which his father Motassem had erected on the hill of Pied Horses, and which commanded the whole city of Samarah, was in his idea far too scanty; he added therefore five wings, or rather other palaces, which he destined for the particular gratification of each of his senses.

In the first of these were tables continually covered with the most exquisite dainties, which were supplied both by night and

by day according to their constant consumption, whilst the most delicious wines and the choicest cordials flowed forth from a hundred fountains that were never exhausted. This palace was called "The Eternal or Unsatiating Banquet."

The second was styled "The Temple of Melody, or the Nectar of the Soul." It was inhabited by the most skilful musicians and admired poets of the time, who not only displayed their talents within, but dispersing in bands without, caused every surrounding scene to reverberate their songs, which were continually varied in the most delightful succession.

The palace named "The Delight of the Eyes, or the Support of Memory," was one entire enchantment. Rarities collected from every corner of the earth were there found in such profusion as to dazzle and confound, but for the order in which they were arranged. One gallery exhibited the pictures of the celebrated Mani, and statues that seemed to be alive. Here a well-managed perspective attracted the sight, there the magic of optics agreeably deceived it; whilst the naturalist on his part exhibited, in their several classes, the various gifts that Heaven had bestowed on our globe. In a word, Vathek omitted nothing in this palace that might gratify the curiosity of those who resorted to it, although he was not able to satisfy his own, for he was of all men the most curious.

"The Palace of Perfumes," which was termed likewise "The Incentive to Pleasure," consisted of various halls where the different perfumes which the earth produces were kept perpetually burning in censers of gold. Flambeaus and aromatic lamps were here lighted in open day. But the too powerful effects of this agreeable delirium might be avoided by descending into an immense garden, where an assemblage of every fragrant flower diffused through the air the purest odours.

The fifth palace, denominated "The Retreat of Joy, or the Dangerous," was frequented by troops of young females beautiful as the houris and not less seducing, who never failed to receive with caresses all whom the Caliph allowed to approach them; for he was by no means disposed to be jealous, as his own women were secluded within the palace he inhabited himself.

Notwithstanding the sensuality in which Vathek indulged, he experienced no abatement in the love of his people, who thought that a sovereign immersed in pleasure was not less

tolerable to his subjects than one that employed himself in creating them foes. But the unquiet and impetuous disposition of the Caliph would not allow him to rest there; he had studied so much for his amusement in the lifetime of his father, as to acquire a great deal of knowledge, though not a sufficiency to satisfy himself; for he wished to know everything, even sciences that did not exist. He was fond of engaging in disputes with the learned, but liked them not to push their opposition with warmth; he stopped the mouths of those with presents whose mouths could be stopped, whilst others, whom his liberality was unable to subdue, he sent to prison to cool their blood,—a remedy that often succeeded.

Vathek discovered also a predilection for theological controversy, but it was not with the orthodox that he usually held. By this means he induced the zealots to oppose him, and then persecuted them in return; for he resolved at any rate to have reason on his side.

The great prophet Mahomet, whose vicars the caliphs are, beheld with indignation from his abode in the seventh heaven the irreligious conduct of such a vicegerent. "Let us leave him to himself," said he to the genii, who are always ready to receive his commands; "let us see to what lengths his folly and impiety will carry him; if he run into excess we shall know how to chastise him. Assist him, therefore, to complete the tower which, in imitation of Nimrod, he hath begun, not, like that great warrior, to escape being drowned, but from the insolent curiosity of penetrating the secrets of Heaven; he will not divine the fate that awaits him."

The genii obeyed, and when the workmen had raised their structure a cubit in the day-time, two cubits more were added in the night. The expedition with which the fabric arose was not a little flattering to the vanity of Vathek. He fancied that even insensible matter showed a forwardness to subserve his designs, not considering that the successes of the foolish and wicked form the first rod of their chastisement.

His pride arrived at its height when, having ascended for the first time the eleven thousand stairs of his tower, he cast his eyes below and beheld men not larger than pismires, mountains than shells, and cities than beehives. The idea which such an elevation inspired of his own grandeur completely bewildered him; he was almost ready to adore himself,

till, lifting his eyes upward, he saw the stars as high above him as they appeared when he stood on the surface of the earth. He consoled himself, however, for this transient perception of his littleness, with the thought of being great in the eyes of others, and flattered himself that the light of his mind would extend beyond the reach of his sight, and transfer to the stars the decrees of his destiny.

With this view the inquisitive Prince passed most of his nights on the summit of his tower, till he became an adept in the mysteries of astrology, and imagined that the planets had disclosed to him the most marvellous adventures, which were to be accomplished by an extraordinary personage from a country altogether unknown. Prompted by motives of curiosity, he had always been courteous to strangers, but from this instant he redoubled his attention, and ordered it to be announced by sound of trumpet through all the streets of Samarah that no one of his subjects, on peril of displeasure, should either lodge or detain a traveller, but forthwith bring him to the palace.

Not long after this proclamation, there arrived in his metropolis a man so hideous, that the very guards who arrested him were forced to shut their eyes as they led him along. The Caliph himself appeared startled at so horrible a visage, but joy succeeded to this emotion of terror when the stranger displayed to his view such rarities as he had never before seen, and of which he had no conception.

In reality nothing was ever so extraordinary as the merchandize this stranger produced; most of his curiosities, which were not less admirable for their workmanship than splendour, had, besides, their several virtues described on a parchment fastened to each. There were slippers which enabled the feet to walk; knives that cut without the motion of a hand; sabres which dealt the blow at the person they were wished to strike, and the whole enriched with gems that were hitherto unknown.

The sabres, whose blades emitted a dazzling radiance, fixed more than all the Caliph's attention, who promised himself to decipher at his leisure the uncouth characters engraven on their sides. Without, therefore, demanding their price, he ordered all the coined gold to be brought from his treasury, and commanded the merchant to take what he pleased; the stranger complied with modesty and silence.

Vathek, imagining that the merchant's taciturnity was occasioned by the awe which his presence inspired, encouraged him to advance, and asked him, with an air of condescension, "Who he was? whence he came? and where he obtained such beautiful commodities?" The man, or rather monster, instead of making a reply, thrice rubbed his forehead, which, as well as his body, was blacker than ebony; four times clapped his paunch, the projection of which was enormous; opened wide his huge eyes, which glowed like firebrands; began to laugh with a hideous noise, and discovered his long amber-coloured teeth bestreaked with green.

The Caliph, though a little startled, renewed his inquiries, but without being able to procure a reply; at which, beginning to be ruffled, he exclaimed: "Knowest thou, varlet, who I am? and at whom thou art aiming thy gibes?" Then, addressing his guards, "Have ye heard him speak? is he dumb?"

"He hath spoken," they replied, "though but little."

"Let him speak again then," said Vathek, "and tell me who he is, from whence he came, and where he procured these singular curiosities, or I swear by the ass of Balaam that I will make him rue his pertinacity."

The menace was accompanied by the Caliph with one of his angry and perilous glances, which the stranger sustained without the slightest emotion, although his eyes were fixed on the terrible eye of the Prince.

No words can describe the amazement of the courtiers when they beheld this rude merchant withstand the encounter unshocked. They all fell prostrate with their faces on the ground to avoid the risk of their lives, and continued in the same abject posture till the Caliph exclaimed in a furious tone: "Up, cowards! seize the miscreant! see that he be committed to prison and guarded by the best of my soldiers! Let him, however, retain the money I gave him; it is not my intent to take from him his property, I only want him to speak."

No sooner had he uttered these words than the stranger was surrounded, pinioned with strong fetters, and hurried away to the prison of the great tower, which was encompassed by seven empalements of iron bars, and armed with spikes in every direction longer and sharper than spits.

The Caliph, nevertheless, remained in the most violent

agitation; he sat down indeed to eat, but of the three hundred covers that were daily placed before him could taste of no more than thirty-two. A diet to which he had been so little accustomed was sufficient of itself to prevent him from sleeping; what then must be its effect when joined to the anxiety that preyed upon his spirits? At the first glimpse of dawn he hastened to the prison, again to importune this intractable stranger; but the rage of Vathek exceeded all bounds on finding the prison empty, the grates burst asunder, and his guards lying lifeless around him. In the paroxysm of his passion he fell furiously on the poor carcasses, and kicked them till evening without intermission. His courtiers and viziers exerted their efforts to soothe his extravagance; but finding every expedient ineffectual, they all united in one vociferation: "The Caliph is gone mad! the Caliph is out of his senses!"

This outcry, which soon resounded through the streets of Samarah, at length reaching the ears of Carathis, his mother, she flew in the utmost consternation to try her ascendency on the mind of her son. Her tears and caresses called off his attention, and he was prevailed upon by her entreaties to be brought back to the palace.

Carathis, apprehensive of leaving Vathek to himself, caused him to be put to bed, and seating herself by him, endeavoured by her conversation to heal and compose him. Nor could any one have attempted it with better success, for the Caliph not only loved her as a mother, but respected her as a person of superior genius; it was she who had induced him, being a Greek herself, to adopt all the sciences and systems of her country, which good Mussulmans hold in such thorough abhorrence. Judicial astrology was one of those systems in which Carathis was a perfect adept; she began therefore with reminding her son of the promise which the stars had made him, and intimated an intention of consulting them again.

"Alas!" sighed the Caliph, as soon as he could speak, "what a fool have I been! not for the kicks bestowed on my guards who so tamely submitted to death, but for never considering that this extraordinary man was the same the planets had foretold, whom, instead of ill-treating, I should have conciliated by all the arts of persuasion."

"The past," said Carathis, "cannot be recalled, but it behoves us to think of the future; perhaps you may again see

the object you so much regret; it is possible the inscriptions on the sabres will afford information. Eat, therefore, and take thy repose, my dear son; we will consider, to-morrow, in what manner to act."

Vathek yielded to her counsel as well as he could, and arose in the morning with a mind more at ease. The sabres he commanded to be instantly brought, and poring upon them through a green glass, that their glittering might not dazzle, he set himself in earnest to decipher the inscriptions; but his reiterated attempts were all of them nugatory; in vain did he beat his head and bite his nails, not a letter of the whole was he able to ascertain. So unlucky a disappointment would have undone him again, had not Carathis by good fortune entered the apartment.

"Have patience, son!" said she; "you certainly are possessed of every important science, but the knowledge of languages is a trifle at best, and the accomplishment of none but a pedant. Issue forth a proclamation that you will confer such rewards as become your greatness upon any one that shall interpret what you do not understand, and what it is beneath you to learn; you will soon find your curiosity gratified."

"That may be," said the Caliph; "but in the meantime I shall be horribly disgusted by a crowd of smatterers, who will come to the trial as much for the pleasure of retailing their jargon as from the hope of gaining the reward. To avoid this evil, it will be proper to add that I will put every candidate to death who shall fail to give satisfaction; for, thank heaven! I have skill enough to distinguish between one that translates and one that invents."

"Of that I have no doubt," replied Carathis; "but to put the ignorant to death is somewhat severe, and may be productive of dangerous effects; content yourself with commanding their beards to be burnt,—beards in a state are not quite so essential as men."

The Caliph submitted to the reasons of his mother, and sending for Morakanabad, his prime vizier, said: "Let the common criers proclaim, not only in Samarah, but throughout every city in my empire, that whosoever will repair hither and decipher certain characters which appear to be inexplicable, shall experience the liberality for which I am renowned; but

that all who fail upon trial shall have their beards burnt off to the last hair. Let them add also that I will bestow fifty beautiful slaves, and as many jars of apricots from the isle of Kirmith, upon any man that shall bring me intelligence of the stranger."

The subjects of the Caliph, like their sovereign, being great admirers of women and apricots from Kirmith, felt their mouths water at these promises, but were totally unable to gratify their hankering, for no one knew which way the stranger had gone.

As to the Caliph's other requisition, the result was different. The learned, the half-learned, and those who were neither, but fancied themselves equal to both, came boldly to hazard their beards, and all shamefully lost them.

The exaction of these forfeitures, which found sufficient employment for the eunuchs, gave them such a smell of singed hair as greatly to disgust the ladies of the seraglio, and make it necessary that this new occupation of their guardians should be transferred into other hands.

At length, however, an old man presented himself whose beard was a cubit and a half longer than any that had appeared before him. The officers of the palace whispered to each other, as they ushered him in, "What a pity such a beard should be burnt!" Even the Caliph, when he saw it, concurred with them in opinion, but his concern was entirely needless. This venerable personage read the characters with facility, and explained them verbatim as follows: "We were made where everything good is made; we are the least of the wonders of a place where all is wonderful, and deserving the sight of the first potentate on earth."

"You translate admirably!" cried Vathek; "I know to what these marvellous characters allude. Let him receive as many robes of honour and thousands of sequins of gold, as he hath spoken words. I am in some measure relieved from the perplexity that embarrassed me."

Vathek invited the old man to dine, and even to remain some days in the palace. Unluckily for him he accepted the offer; for the Caliph, having ordered him next morning to be called, said: "Read again to me what you have read already; I cannot hear too often the promise that is made me, the completion of which I languish to obtain."

The old man forthwith put on his green spectacles, but they instantly dropped from his nose on perceiving that the characters he had read the day preceding had given place to others of different import.

"What ails you?" asked the Caliph; "and why these symptoms of wonder?"

"Sovereign of the world," replied the old man, "these sabres hold another language to-day from that they yesterday held."

"How say you?" returned Vathek; "but it matters not! tell me, if you can, what they mean."

"It is this, my Lord," rejoined the old man: "'Woe to the rash mortal who seeks to know that of which he should remain ignorant, and to undertake that which surpasseth his power!'"

"And woe to thee!" cried the Caliph, in a burst of indignation; "to-day thou art void of understanding; begone from my presence; they shall burn but the half of thy beard, because thou wert yesterday fortunate in guessing;—my gifts I never resume."

The old man, wise enough to perceive he had luckily escaped, considering the folly of disclosing so disgusting a truth, immediately withdrew and appeared not again.

But it was not long before Vathek discovered abundant reason to regret his precipitation; for though he could not decipher the characters himself, yet by constantly poring upon them he plainly perceived that they every day changed, and unfortunately no other candidate offered to explain them. This perplexing occupation inflamed his blood, dazzled his sight, and brought on a giddiness and debility that he could not support. He failed not, however, though in so reduced a condition, to be often carried to his tower, as he flattered himself that he might there read in the stars which he went to consult something more congenial to his wishes: but in this his hopes were deluded; for his eyes, dimmed by the vapours of his head, began to subserve his curiosity so ill, that he beheld nothing but a thick dun cloud, which he took for the most direful of omens.

Agitated with so much anxiety, Vathek entirely lost all firmness; a fever seized him, and his appetite failed. Instead of being one of the greatest eaters, he became as distinguished for drinking. So insatiable was the thirst which tormented him, that his mouth, like a funnel, was always open to receive the

various liquors that might be poured into it, and especially cold water, which calmed him more than every other.

This unhappy Prince being thus incapacitated for the enjoyment of any pleasure, commanded the palaces of the five senses to be shut up, forbore to appear in public, either to display his magnificence or administer justice, and retired to the inmost apartment of his harem. As he had ever been an indulgent husband, his wives, overwhelmed with grief at his deplorable situation, incessantly offered their prayers for his health and unremittingly supplied him with water.

In the meantime the Princess Carathis, whose affliction no words can describe, instead of restraining herself to sobbing and tears, was closeted daily with the Vizier Morakanabad, to find out some cure or mitigation of the Caliph's disease. Under the persuasion that it was caused by enchantment, they turned over together, leaf by leaf, all the books of magic that might point out a remedy, and caused the horrible stranger, whom they accused as the enchanter, to be everywhere sought for with the strictest diligence.

At the distance of a few miles from Samarah stood a high mountain, whose sides were swarded with wild thyme and basil, and its summit overspread with so delightful a plain, that it might be taken for the paradise destined for the faithful. Upon it grew a hundred thickets of eglantine and other fragrant shrubs, a hundred arbours of roses, jessamine, and honeysuckle, as many clumps of orange trees, cedar, and citron, whose branches, interwoven with the palm, the pomegranate, and the vine, presented every luxury that could regale the eye or the taste. The ground was strewed with violets, hare-bells, and pansies, in the midst of which sprung forth tufts of jonquils, hyacinths, and carnations, with every other perfume that impregnates the air. Four fountains, not less clear than deep, and so abundant as to slake the thirst of ten armies, seemed profusely placed here to make the scene more resemble the Garden of Eden, which was watered by the four sacred rivers. Here the nightingale sang the birth of the rose, her well-beloved, and at the same time lamented its short-lived beauty; whilst the turtle deplored the loss of more substantial pleasures, and the wakeful lark hailed the rising light that reanimates the whole creation. Here more than anywhere the mingled melodies of birds expressed the various passions they inspired,

as if the exquisite fruits which they pecked at pleasure had given them a double energy.

To this mountain Vathek was sometimes brought for the sake of breathing a purer air, and especially to drink at will of the four fountains, which were reputed in the highest degree salubrious and sacred to himself. His attendants were his mother, his wives, and some eunuchs, who assiduously employed themselves in filling capacious bowls of rock crystal, and emulously presenting them to him; but it frequently happened that his avidity exceeded their zeal, insomuch that he would prostrate himself upon the ground to lap up the water, of which he could never have enough.

One day when this unhappy prince had been long lying in so debasing a posture, a voice, hoarse but strong, thus addressed him: "Why assumest thou the function of a dog, O Caliph, so proud of thy dignity and power?"

At this apostrophe he raised his head, and beheld the stranger that had caused him so much affliction. Inflamed with anger at the sight, he exclaimed:

"Accursed Giaour! what comest thou hither to do? is it not enough to have transformed a prince remarkable for his agility into one of those leather barrels which the Bedouin Arabs carry on their camels when they traverse the deserts? Perceivest thou not that I may perish by drinking to excess no less than by a total abstinence?"

"Drink then this draught," said the stranger, as he presented to him a phial of a red and yellow mixture; "and, to satiate the thirst of thy soul as well as of thy body, know that I am an Indian, but from a region of India which is wholly unknown."

The Caliph, delighted to see his desires accomplished in part, and flattering himself with the hope of obtaining their entire fulfilment, without a moment's hesitation swallowed the potion, and instantaneously found his health restored, his thirst appeased, and his limbs as agile as ever.

In the transports of his joy Vathek leaped upon the neck of the frightful Indian, and kissed his horrid mouth and hollow cheeks, as though they had been the coral lips and the lilies and roses of his most beautiful wives; whilst they, less terrified than jealous at the sight, dropped their veils to hide the blush of mortification that suffused their foreheads.

Nor would the scene have closed here, had not Carathis,

with all the art of insinuation, a little repressed the raptures of her son. Having prevailed upon him to return to Samarah, she caused a herald to precede him, whom she commanded to proclaim as loudly as possible: "The wonderful stranger hath appeared again; he hath healed the Caliph; he hath spoken! he hath spoken!"

Forthwith all the inhabitants of this vast city quitted their habitations, and ran together in crowds to see the procession of Vathek and the Indian, whom they now blessed as much as they had before execrated, incessantly shouting: "He hath healed our sovereign; he hath spoken! he hath spoken!" Nor were these words forgotten in the public festivals which were celebrated the same evening, to testify the general joy; for the poets applied them as a chorus to all the songs they composed.

The Caliph in the meanwhile caused the palaces of the senses to be again set open; and, as he found himself prompted to visit that of taste in preference to the rest, immediately ordered a splendid entertainment, to which his great officers and favourite courtiers were all invited. The Indian, who was placed near the Prince, seemed to think that as a proper acknowledgment of so distinguished a privilege he could neither eat, drink, nor talk too much. The various dainties were no sooner served up than they vanished, to the great mortification of Vathek, who piqued himself on being the greatest eater alive, and at this time in particular had an excellent appetite.

The rest of the company looked round at each other in amazement; but the Indian, without appearing to observe it, quaffed large bumpers to the health of each of them, sung in a style altogether extravagant, related stories at which he laughed immoderately, and poured forth extemporaneous verses, which would not have been thought bad but for the strange grimaces with which they were uttered. In a word his loquacity was equal to that of a hundred astrologers; he ate as much as a hundred porters, and caroused in proportion.

The Caliph, notwithstanding the table had been thirty times covered, found himself incommoded by the voraciousness of his guest, who was now considerably declined in the Prince's esteem. Vathek, however, being unwilling to betray the chagrin he could hardly disguise, said in a whisper to Bababalouk, the

chief of his eunuchs: "You see how enormous his performances in every way are, what would be the consequence should he get at my wives! Go! redouble your vigilance, and be sure look well to my Circassians, who would be more to his taste than all of the rest."

The bird of the morning had thrice renewed his song when the hour of the Divan sounded. Vathek, in gratitude to his subjects having promised to attend, immediately arose from table and repaired thither, leaning upon his vizier, who could scarcely support him, so disordered was the poor Prince by the wine he had drunk, and still more by the extravagant vagaries of his boisterous guest.

The viziers, the officers of the crown and of the law, arranged themselves in a semicircle about their sovereign and preserved a respectful silence, whilst the Indian, who looked as cool as if come from a fast, sat down without ceremony on the step of the throne, laughing in his sleeve at the indignation with which his temerity had filled the spectators.

The Caliph, however, whose ideas were confused and his head embarrassed, went on administering justice at haphazard, till at length the prime vizier, perceiving his situation, hit upon a sudden expedient to interrupt the audience and rescue the honour of his master, to whom he said in a whisper: "My Lord, the Princess Carathis, who hath passed the night in consulting the planets, informs you that they portend you evil, and the danger is urgent. Beware lest this stranger, whom you have so lavishly recompensed for his magical gewgaws, should make some attempt on your life; his liquor, which at first had the appearance of effecting your cure, may be no more than a poison of a sudden operation. Slight not this surmise, ask him at least of what it was compounded, whence he procured it, and mention the sabres which you seem to have forgotten."

Vathek, to whom the insolent airs of the stranger became every moment less supportable, intimated to his vizier by a wink of acquiescence that he would adopt his advice, and at once turning towards the Indian said: "Get up, and declare in full Divan of what drugs the liquor was compounded you enjoined me to take, for it is suspected to be poison; add also the explanation I have so earnestly desired concerning the sabres you sold me, and thus show your gratitude for the favours heaped on you."

Having pronounced these words in as moderate a tone as a caliph well could, he waited in silent expectation for an answer. But the Indian, still keeping his seat, began to renew his loud shouts of laughter, and exhibit the same horrid grimaces he had shown them before, without vouchsafing a word in reply. Vathek, no longer able to brook such insolence, immediately kicked him from the steps; instantly descending, repeated his blow, and persisted with such assiduity as incited all who were present to follow his example. Every foot was aimed at the Indian, and no sooner had any one given him a kick than he felt himself constrained to reiterate the stroke.

The stranger afforded them no small entertainment; for, being both short and plump, he collected himself into a ball, and rolled round on all sides at the blows of his assailants, who pressed after him wherever he turned with an eagerness beyond conception, whilst their numbers where every moment increasing. The ball indeed, in passing from one apartment to another, drew every person after it that came in its way, insomuch that the whole palace was thrown into confusion, and resounded with a tremendous clamour. The women of the harem, amazed at the uproar, flew to their blinds to discover the cause; but no sooner did they catch a glimpse of the ball than, feeling themselves unable to refrain, they broke from the clutches of their eunuchs, who to stop their flight pinched them till they bled, but in vain: whilst themselves, though trembling with terror at the escape of their charge, were as incapable of resisting the attraction.

The Indian, after having traversed the halls, galleries, chambers, kitchens, gardens, and stables of the palace, at last took his course through the courts; whilst the Caliph, pursuing him closer than the rest, bestowed as many kicks as he possibly could, yet not without receiving now and then one, which his competitors in their eagerness designed for the ball.

Carathis, Morakanabad, and two or three old viziers, whose wisdom had hitherto withstood the attraction, wishing to prevent Vathek from exposing himself in the presence of his subjects, fell down in his way to impede the pursuit; but he, regardless of their obstruction, leaped over their heads and went on as before. They then ordered the Muezzins to call the people to prayers, both for the sake of getting them out of the way, and of endeavouring by their petitions to avert the

calamity; but neither of these expedients was a whit more successful; the sight of this fatal ball was alone sufficient to draw after it every beholder. The Muezzins themselves, though they saw it but at a distance, hastened down from their minarets and mixed with the crowd, which continued to increase in so surprising a manner, that scarce an inhabitant was left in Samarah, except the aged, the sick confined to their beds, and infants at the breast, whose nurses could run more nimbly without them. Even Carathis, Morakanabad, and the rest were all become of the party.

The shrill screams of the females, who had broken from their apartments and were unable to extricate themselves from the pressure of the crowd, together with those of the eunuchs jostling after them, terrified lest their charge should escape from their sight, increased by the execrations of husbands urging forward and menacing both, kicks given and received, stumblings and overthrows at every step; in a word, the confusion that universally prevailed rendered Samarah like a city taken by storm and devoted to absolute plunder.

At last the cursed Indian, who still preserved his rotundity of figure, after passing through all the streets and public places, and leaving them empty, rolled onwards to the plain of Catoul, and traversed the valley at the foot of the mountain of the Four Fountains.

As a continual fall of water had excavated an immense gulf in the valley, whose opposite side was closed in by a steep acclivity, the Caliph and his attendants were apprehensive lest the ball should bound into the chasm, and, to prevent it, redoubled their efforts, but in vain. The Indian persevered in his onward direction, and, as had been apprehended, glancing from the precipice with the rapidity of lightning, was lost in the gulf below.

Vathek would have followed the perfidious Giaour, had not an invisible agency arrested his progress. The multitude that pressed after him were at once checked in the same manner, and a calm instantaneously ensued. They all gazed at each other with an air of astonishment; and, notwithstanding that the loss of veils and turbans, together with torn habits and dust blended with sweat, presented a most laughable spectacle, there was not one smile to be seen; on the contrary all, with looks of confusion and sadness, returned in silence to

Samarah, and retired to their inmost apartments, without ever reflecting that they had been impelled by an invisible power into the extravagance for which they reproached themselves; for it is but just that men, who so often arrogate to their own merit the good of which they are but instruments, should attribute to themselves the absurdities which they could not prevent.

The Caliph was the only person that refused to leave the valley. He commanded his tents to be pitched there, and stationed himself on the very edge of the precipice, in spite of the representations of Carathis and Morakanabad, who pointed out the hazard of its brink giving way, and the vicinity to the Magician that had so severely tormented him. Vathek derided all their remonstrances, and, having ordered a thousand flambeaus to be lighted, and directed his attendants to proceed in lighting more, lay down on the slippery margin, and attempted, by help of this artificial splendour, to look through that gloom which all the fires of the empyrean had been insufficient to pervade. One while he fancied to himself voices arising from the depth of the gulf; at another he seemed to distinguish the accents of the Indian; but all was no more than the hollow murmur of waters, and the din of the cataracts that rushed from steep to steep down the sides of the mountain.

Having passed the night in this cruel perturbation, the Caliph at daybreak retired to his tent, where, without taking the least sustenance, he continued to doze till the dusk of evening began again to come on. He then resumed his vigils as before, and persevered in observing them for many nights together. At length, fatigued with so successless an employment, he sought relief from change. To this end he sometimes paced with hasty strides across the plain, and, as he wildly gazed at the stars, reproached them with having deceived him; but lo! on a sudden the clear blue sky appeared streaked over with streams of blood, which reached from the valley even to the city of Samarah. As this awful phenomenon seemed to touch his tower, Vathek at first thought of repairing thither to view it more distinctly; but feeling himself unable to advance, and being overcome with apprehension, he muffled up his face in his robe.

Terrifying as these prodigies were, this impression upon him was no more than momentary, and served only to stimulate

his love of the marvellous. Instead, therefore, of returning to his palace, he persisted in the resolution of abiding where the Indian vanished from his view. One night, however, while he was walking as usual on the plain, the moon and the stars at once were eclipsed, and a total darkness ensued; the earth trembled beneath him, and a voice came forth, the voice of the Giaour, who, in accents more sonorous than thunder, thus addressed him: "Wouldest thou devote thyself to me? Adore then the terrestrial influences, and abjure Mahomet. On these conditions I will bring thee to the palace of subterranean fire; there shalt thou behold in immense depositories the treasures which the stars have promised thee, and which will be conferred by those Intelligences whom thou shalt thus render propitious. It was from thence I brought my sabres, and it is there that Soliman Ben Daoud reposes, surrounded by the talismans that control the world."

The astonished Caliph trembled as he answered, yet in a style that showed him to be no novice in preternatural adventures: "Where art thou? be present to my eyes; dissipate the gloom that perplexes me, and of which I deem thee the cause; after the many flambeaus I have burnt to discover thee, thou mayst at least grant a glimpse of thy horrible visage."

"Abjure then Mahomet," replied the Indian, "and promise me full proofs of thy sincerity, otherwise thou shalt never behold me again."

The unhappy Caliph, instigated by insatiable curiosity, lavished his promises in the utmost profusion. The sky immediately brightened; and by the light of the planets, which seemed almost to blaze, Vathek beheld the earth open, and at the extremity of a vast black chasm a portal of ebony, before which stood the Indian, still blacker, holding in his hand a golden key that caused the lock to resound.

"How," cried Vathek, "can I descend to thee without the certainty of breaking my neck? come take me, and instantly open the portal."

"Not so fast," replied the Indian, "impatient Caliph! Know that I am parched with thirst, and cannot open this door till my thirst be thoroughly appeased. I require the blood of fifty of the most beautiful sons of thy viziers and great men, or neither can my thirst nor thy curiosity be satisfied. Return to Samarah, procure for me this necessary libation,

come back hither, throw it thyself into this chasm, and then shalt thou see!"

Having thus spoken the Indian turned his back on the Caliph, who, incited by the suggestion of demons, resolved on the direful sacrifice. He now pretended to have regained his tranquillity, and set out for Samarah amidst the acclamations of a people who still loved him, and forbore not to rejoice when they believed him to have recovered his reason. So successfully did he conceal the emotion of his heart, that even Carathis and Morakanabad were equally deceived with the rest. Nothing was heard of but festivals and rejoicings; the ball, which no tongue had hitherto ventured to mention, was again brought on the tapis; a general laugh went round, though many, still smarting under the hands of the surgeon from the hurts received in that memorable adventure, had no great reason for mirth.

The prevalence of this gay humour was not a little grateful to Vathek, as perceiving how much it conduced to his project. He put on the appearance of affability to every one, but especially to his viziers and the grandees of his court, whom he failed not to regale with a sumptuous banquet, during which he insensibly inclined the conversation to the children of his guests. Having asked with a good-natured air who of them were blessed with the handsomest boys, every father at once asserted the pretensions of his own, and the contest imperceptibly grew so warm that nothing could have withholden them from coming to blows but their profound reverence for the person of the Caliph. Under the pretence therefore of reconciling the disputants, Vathek took upon him to decide; and with this view commanded the boys to be brought.

It was not long before a troop of these poor children made their appearance, all equipped by their fond mothers with such ornaments as might give the greatest relief to their beauty, or most advantageously display the graces of their age. But whilst this brilliant assemblage attracted the eyes and hearts of every one besides, the Caliph scrutinized each in his turn with a malignant avidity that passed for attention, and selected from their number the fifty whom he judged the Giaour would prefer.

With an equal show of kindness as before, he proposed to celebrate a festival on the plain for the entertainment of his

young favourites, who he said ought to rejoice still more than all at the restoration of his health, on account of the favours he intended for them.

The Caliph's proposal was received with the greatest delight, and soon published through Samarah. Litters, camels, and horses were prepared. Women and children, old men and young, every one placed himself in the station he chose. The cavalcade set forward, attended by all the confectioners in the city and its precincts; the populace following on foot composed an amazing crowd, and occasioned no little noise; all was joy, nor did any one call to mind what most of them had suffered when they first travelled the road they were now passing so gaily.

The evening was serene, the air refreshing, the sky clear, and the flowers exhaled their fragrance; the beams of the declining sun, whose mild splendour reposed on the summit of the mountain, shed a glow of ruddy light over its green declivity and the white flocks sporting upon it; no sounds were audible, save the murmurs of the Four Fountains, and the reeds and voices of shepherds, calling to each other from different eminences.

The lovely innocents proceeding to the destined sacrifice added not a little to the hilarity of the scene; they approached the plain full of sportiveness, some coursing butterflies, others culling flowers, or picking up the shining little pebbles that attracted their notice. At intervals they nimbly started from each other, for the sake of being caught again and mutually imparting a thousand caresses.

The dreadful chasm, at whose bottom the portal of ebony was placed, began to appear at a distance; it looked like a black streak that divided the plain. Morakanabad and his companions took it for some work which the Caliph had ordered; unhappy men! little did they surmise for what it was destined.

Vathek, not liking they should examine it too nearly, stopped the procession, and ordered a spacious circle to be formed on this side, at some distance from the accursed chasm. The body-guard of eunuchs was detached to measure out the lists intended for the games, and prepare ringles for the lines to keep off the crowd. The fifty competitors were soon stripped, and presented to the admiration of the spectators the suppleness and grace of their delicate limbs; their eyes sparkled

with a joy which those of their fond parents reflected. Every one offered wishes for the little candidate nearest his heart, and doubted not of his being victorious ; a breathless suspense awaited the contest of these amiable and innocent victims.

The Caliph, availing himself of the first moment to retire from the crowd, advanced towards the chasm, and there heard, yet not without shuddering, the voice of the Indian, who, gnashing his teeth, eagerly demanded: "Where are they? where are they? perceivest thou not how my mouth waters?"

"Relentless Giaour!" answered Vathek with emotion, "can nothing content thee but the massacre of these lovely victims? Ah! wert thou to behold their beauty it must certainly move thy compassion."

"Perdition on thy compassion, babbler!" cried the Indian. "Give them me, instantly give them, or my portal shall be closed against thee for ever!"

"Not so loudly," replied the Caliph, blushing.

"I understand thee," returned the Giaour with the grin of an ogre; "thou wantest to summon up more presence of mind; I will for a moment forbear."

During this exquisite dialogue the games went forward with all alacrity, and at length concluded just as the twilight began to overcast the mountains. Vathek, who was still standing on the edge of the chasm, called out, with all his might: "Let my fifty little favourites approach me separately, and let them come in the order of their success. To the first I will give my diamond bracelet, to the second my collar of emeralds, to the third my aigret of rubies, to the fourth my girdle of topazes, and to the rest each a part of my dress, even down to my slippers."

This declaration was received with reiterated acclamations, and all extolled the liberality of a Prince who would thus strip himself for the amusement of his subjects and the encouragement of the rising generation.

The Caliph in the meanwhile undressed himself by degrees, and, raising his arm as high as he was able, made each of the prizes glitter in the air; but whilst he delivered it with one hand to the child who sprung forward to receive it, he with the other pushed the poor innocent into the gulf, where the Giaour with a sullen muttering incessantly repeated, "More! more!"

The dreadful device was executed with so much dexterity, that the boy who was approaching him remained unconscious of the fate of his forerunner; and as to spectators, the shades of evening, together with their distance, precluded them from perceiving any object distinctly. Vathek, having in this manner thrown in the last of the fifty, and expecting that the Giaour on receiving them would have presented the key, already fancied himself as great as Soliman, and consequently above being amenable for what he had done: when, to his utter amazement, the chasm closed, and the ground became as entire as the rest of the plain.

No language could express his rage and despair. He execrated the perfidy of the Indian, loaded him with the most infamous invectives, and stamped with his foot as resolving to be heard; he persisted in this demeanour till his strength failed him, and then fell on the earth like one void of sense. His viziers and grandees, who were nearer than the rest, supposed him at first to be sitting on the grass at play with their amiable children; but at length, prompted by doubt, they advanced towards the spot, and found the Caliph alone, who wildly demanded what they wanted.

"Our children! our children!" cried they.

"It is assuredly pleasant," said he, "to make me accountable for accidents; your children while at play fell from the precipice that was here, and I should have experienced their fate had I not been saved by a sudden start back."

At these words the fathers of the fifty boys cried out aloud, the mothers repeated their exclamations an octave higher, whilst the rest, without knowing the cause, soon drowned the voices of both with still louder lamentations of their own.

"Our Caliph," said they, and the report soon circulated, "Our Caliph has played us this trick to gratify his accursed Giaour. Let us punish him for his perfidy! let us avenge ourselves! let us avenge the blood of the innocent! let us throw this cruel Prince into the gulf that is near, and let his name be mentioned no more!"

At this rumour and these menaces, Carathis, full of consternation, hastened to Morakanabad and said: "Vizier, you have lost two beautiful boys, and must necessarily be the most afflicted of fathers; but you are virtuous; save your master."

"I will brave every hazard," replied the vizier, "to rescue

him from his present danger, but afterwards will abandon him to his fate. Bababalouk," continued he, "put yourself at the head of your eunuchs; disperse the mob, and, if possible, bring back this unhappy Prince to his palace." Bababalouk and his fraternity, felicitating each other in a low voice on their disability of ever being fathers, obeyed the mandate of the vizier; who, seconding their exertions to the utmost of his power, at length accomplished his generous enterprise, and retired as he resolved to lament at his leisure.

No sooner had the Caliph re-entered his palace than Carathis commanded the doors to be fastened; but, perceiving the tumult to be still violent, and hearing the imprecation which resounded from all quarters, she said to her son: "Whether the populace be right or wrong, it behoves you to provide for your safety; let us retire to your own apartment, and from thence through the subterranean passage, known only to ourselves, into your tower; there, with the assistance of the mutes who never leave it, we may be able to make some resistance. Bababalouk, supposing us to be still in the palace, will guard its avenues for his own sake; and we shall soon find, without the counsels of that blubberer Morakanabad, what expedient may be the best to adopt."

Vathek, without making the least reply, acquiesced in his mother's proposal, and repeated as he went: "Nefarious Giaour! where art thou? hast thou not yet devoured those poor children? where are thy sabres? thy golden key? thy talismans?"

Carathis, who guessed from these interrogations a part of the truth, had no difficulty to apprehend in getting at the whole, as soon as he should be a little composed in his tower. This Princess was so far from being influenced by scruples, that she was as wicked as woman could be, which is not saying a little, for the sex pique themselves on their superiority in every competition. The recital of the Caliph, therefore, occasioned neither terror nor surprise to his mother; she felt no emotion but from the promises of the Giaour, and said to her son: "This Giaour, it must be confessed, is somewhat sanguinary in his taste, but the terrestrial powers are always terrible; nevertheless, what the one hath promised and the others can confer will prove a sufficient indemnification; no crimes should be thought too dear for such a reward; forbear

then to revile the Indian; you have not fulfilled the conditions to which his services are annexed; for instance, is not a sacrifice to the subterranean Genii required? and should we not be prepared to offer it as soon as the tumult is subsided? This charge I will take on myself, and have no doubt of succeeding by means of your treasures, which, as there are now so many others in store, may without fear be exhausted."

Accordingly the Princess, who possessed the most consummate skill in the art of persuasion, went immediately back through the subterranean passage; and, presenting herself to the populace from a window of the palace, began to harangue them with all the address of which she was mistress, whilst Bababalouk showered money from both hands amongst the crowd, who by these united means were soon appeased; every person retired to his home, and Carathis returned to the tower.

Prayer at break of day was announced, when Carathis and Vathek ascended the steps which led to the summit of the tower, where they remained for some time, though the weather was lowering and wet. This impending gloom corresponded with their malignant dispositions; but when the sun began to break through the clouds they ordered a pavilion to be raised, as a screen from the intrusion of his beams. The Caliph, overcome with fatigue, sought refreshment from repose, at the same time hoping that significant dreams might attend on his slumbers; whilst the indefatigable Carathis, followed by a party of her mutes, descended to prepare whatever she judged proper for the oblation of the approaching night.

By secret stairs, known only to herself and to her son, she first repaired to the mysterious recesses in which were deposited the mummies that had been brought from the catacombs of the ancient Pharaohs; of these she ordered several to be taken. From thence she resorted to a gallery where, under the guard of fifty female negroes, mute, and blind of the right eye, were preserved the oil of the most venomous serpents, rhinoceros' horns, and woods of a subtile and penetrating odour procured from the interior of the Indies, together with a thousand other horrible rarities. This collection had been formed for a purpose like the present by Carathis herself, from a presentiment that she might one day enjoy some intercourse with the infernal powers, to whom she had ever been passionately attached, and to whose taste she was no stranger.

To familiarize herself the better with the horrors in view, the Princess remained in the company of her negresses, who squinted in the most amiable manner from the only eye they had, and leered with exquisite delight at the skulls and skeletons which Carathis had drawn forth from her cabinets, whose key she intrusted to no one; all of them making contortions, and uttering a frightful jargon, but very amusing to the Princess, till at last being stunned by their gibbering, and suffocated by the potency of their exhalations, she was forced to quit the gallery, after stripping it of part of its treasures.

Whilst she was thus occupied the Caliph, who instead of the visions he expected had acquired in these insubstantial regions a voracious appetite, was greatly provoked at the negresses; for, having totally forgotten their deafness, he had impatiently asked them for food, and seeing them regardless of his demand, he began to cuff, pinch, and push them, till Carathis arrived to terminate a scene so indecent, to the great content of these miserable creatures, who, having been brought up by her, understood all her signs, and communicated in the same way their thoughts in return.

"Son! what means all this?" said she, panting for breath. "I thought I heard as I came up the shrieks of a thousand bats tearing from their crannies in the recesses of a cavern; and it was the outcry only of these poor mutes, whom you were so unmercifully abusing. In truth you but ill deserve the admirable provision I have brought you."

"Give it me instantly," exclaimed the Caliph; "I am perishing for hunger!"

"As to that," answered she, "you must have an excellent stomach, if it can digest what I have been preparing."

"Be quick," replied the Caliph; "but, oh heavens! what horrors! what do you intend?"

"Come, come," returned Carathis, "be not so squeamish, but help me to arrange everything properly, and you shall see that what you reject with such symptoms of disgust will soon complete your felicity. Let us get ready the pile for the sacrifice of to-night, and think not of eating till that is performed; know you not that all solemn rites are preceded by a rigorous abstinence?"

The Caliph, not daring to object, abandoned himself to grief and the wind that ravaged his entrails, whilst his mother went

forward with the requisite operations. Phials of serpents' oil, mummies, and bones were soon set in order on the balustrade of the tower; the pile began to rise, and in three hours was as many cubits high. At length darkness approached, and Carathis, having stripped herself to her inmost garment, clapped her hands in an impulse of ecstasy and struck light with all her force. The mutes followed her example; but Vathek, extenuated with hunger and impatience, was unable to support himself, and fell down in a swoon. The sparks had already kindled the dry wood, the venomous oil burst into a thousand blue flames, the mummies dissolving emitted a thick dun vapour, and the rhinoceros' horns beginning to consume, all together diffused such a stench, that the Caliph recovering started from his trance, and gazed wildly on the scene in full blaze around him. The oil gushed forth in a plenitude of streams; and the negresses, who supplied it without intermission, united their cries to those of the Princess. At last the fire became so violent, and the flames reflected from the polished marble so dazzling, that the Caliph, unable to withstand the heat and the blaze, effected his escape, and clambered up the imperial standard.

In the meantime the inhabitants of Samarah, scared at the light which shone over the city, arose in haste, ascended their roofs, beheld the tower on fire, and hurried half naked to the square. Their love to their Sovereign immediately awoke; and, apprehending him in danger of perishing in his tower, their whole thoughts were occupied with the means of his safety. Morakanabad flew from his retirement, wiped away his tears, and cried out for water like the rest. Bababalouk, whose olfactory nerves were more familiarized to magical odours, readily conjecturing that Carathis was engaged in her favourite amusements, strenuously exhorted them not to be alarmed. Him, however, they treated as an old poltroon, and forbore not to style him a rascally traitor. The camels and dromedaries were advancing with water, but no one knew by which way to enter the tower. Whilst the populace was obstinate in forcing the doors, a violent east wind drove such a volume of flame against them, as at first forced them off, but afterwards rekindled their zeal; at the same time the stench of the horns and mummies increasing, most of the crowd fell backward in a state of suffocation; those that kept their feet

mutually wondered at the cause of the smell, and admonished each other to retire. Morakanabad, more sick than the rest, remained in a piteous condition; holding his nose with one hand, he persisted in his efforts, with the other, to burst open the doors and obtain admission. A hundred and forty of the strongest and most resolute at length accomplished their purpose; having gained the staircase by their violent exertions, they attained a great height in a quarter of an hour.

Carathis, alarmed at the signs of her mutes, advanced to the staircase, went down a few steps, and heard several voices calling out from below: "You shall in a moment have water!" Being rather alert, considering her age, she presently regained the top of the tower, and bade her son suspend the sacrifice for some minutes, adding: "We shall soon be enabled to render it more grateful; certain dolts of your subjects, imagining no doubt that we were on fire, have been rash enough to break through those doors which had hitherto remained inviolate, for the sake of bringing up water; they are very kind, you must allow, so soon to forget the wrongs you have done them, but that is of little moment. Let us offer them to the Giaour; let them come up; our mutes, who neither want strength nor experience, will soon dispatch them, exhausted as they are with fatigue."

"Be it so," answered the Caliph, "provided we finish and I dine."

In fact these good people, out of breath from ascending eleven thousand stairs in such haste, and chagrined at having spilt by the way the water they had taken, were no sooner arrived at the top than the blaze of the flames and the fumes of the mummies at once overpowered their senses. It was a pity! for they beheld not the agreeable smile with which the mutes and the negresses adjusted the cord to their necks; these amiable personages rejoiced, however, no less at the scene; never before had the ceremony of strangling been performed with so much facility; they all fell without the least resistance or struggle, so that Vathek in the space of a few moments found himself surrounded by the dead bodies of his faithfullest subjects, all which were thrown on the top of the pile.

Carathis, whose presence of mind never forsook her, perceiving that she had carcasses sufficient to complete her

oblation, commanded the chains to be stretched across the staircase, and the iron doors barricadoed, that no more might come up.

No sooner were these orders obeyed than the tower shook, the dead bodies vanished in the flames, which at once changed from a swarthy crimson to a bright rose colour; an ambient vapour emitted the most exquisite fragrance, the marble columns rang with harmonious sounds, and the liquefied horns diffused a delicious perfume. Carathis, in transports, anticipated the success of her enterprise, whilst her mutes and negresses, to whom these sweets had given the colic, retired to their cells grumbling.

Scarcely were they gone when, instead of the pile, horns, mummies, and ashes, the Caliph both saw and felt, with a degree of pleasure which he could not express, a table covered with the most magnificent repast; flagons of wine, and vases of exquisite sherbet floating on snow. He availed himself without scruple of such an entertainment, and had already laid hands on a lamb stuffed with pistachios, whilst Carathis was privately drawing from a filigree urn a parchment that seemed to be endless, and which had escaped the notice of her son; totally occupied in gratifying an importunate appetite, he left her to peruse it without interruption, which having finished, she said to him in an authoritative tone, "Put an end to your gluttony, and hear the splendid promises with which you are favoured!" She then read as follows: "Vathek, my well-beloved, thou hast surpassed my hopes; my nostrils have been regaled by the savour of thy mummies, thy horns, and still more by the lives devoted on the pile. At the full of the moon cause the bands of thy musicians and thy tymbals to be heard; depart from thy palace surrounded by all the pageants of majesty,—thy most faithful slaves, thy best beloved wives, thy most magnificent litters, thy richest loaden camels,—and set forward on thy way to Istakar; there await I thy coming; that is the region of wonders; there shalt thou receive the diadem of Gian Ben Gian, the talismans of Soliman, and the treasures of the Preadamite Sultans; there shalt thou be solaced with all kinds of delight. But beware how thou enterest any dwelling on thy route, or thou shalt feel the effects of my anger."

The Caliph, who, notwithstanding his habitual luxury, had

never before dined with so much satisfaction, gave full scope to the joy of these golden tidings, and betook himself to drinking anew. Carathis, whose antipathy to wine was by no means insuperable, failed not to supply a reason for every bumper, which they ironically quaffed to the health of Mahomet. This infernal liquor completed their impious temerity, and prompted them to utter a profusion of blasphemies; they gave a loose to their wit at the expense of the ass of Balaam, the dog of the seven sleepers, and the other animals admitted into the paradise of Mahomet. In this sprightly humour they descended the eleven thousand stairs, diverting themselves as they went at the anxious faces they saw on the square through the eyelets of the tower, and at length arrived at the royal apartments by the subterranean passage. Bababalouk was parading to and fro, and issuing his mandates with great pomp to the eunuchs, who were snuffing the lights and painting the eyes of the Circassians. No sooner did he catch sight of the Caliph and his mother than he exclaimed, "Hah! you have then, I perceive, escaped from the flames; I was not however altogether out of doubt."

"Of what moment is it to us what you thought, or think?" cried Carathis; "go, speed, tell Morakanabad that we immediately want him; and take care how you stop by the way to make your insipid reflections."

Morakanabad delayed not to obey the summons, and was received by Vathek and his mother with great solemnity; they told him, with an air of composure and commiseration, that the fire at the top of the tower was extinguished; but that it had cost the lives of the brave people who sought to assist them.

"Still more misfortunes!" cried Morakanabad, with a sigh. "Ah, Commander of the faithful, our holy Prophet is certainly irritated against us! it behoves you to appease him."

"We will appease him hereafter!" replied the Caliph, with a smile that augured nothing of good. "You will have leisure sufficient for your supplications during my absence; for this country is the bane of my health. I am disgusted with the mountain of the Four Fountains, and am resolved to go and drink of the stream of Rocnabad; I long to refresh myself in the delightful valleys which it waters. Do you, with the advice of my mother, govern my dominions, and take care to supply

whatever her experiments may demand; for you well know that our tower abounds in materials for the advancement of science."

The tower but ill suited Morakanabad's taste. Immense treasures had been lavished upon it; and nothing had he ever seen carried thither but female negroes, mutes, and abominable drugs. Nor did he know well what to think of Carathis; who, like a chameleon, could assume all possible colours; her cursed eloquence had often driven the poor Mussulman to his last shifts. He considered, however, that if she possessed but few good qualities, her son had still fewer; and that the alternative on the whole would be in her favour. Consoled, therefore, with this reflection, he went in good spirits to soothe the populace, and make the proper arrangements for his master's journey.

Vathek, to conciliate the Spirits of the subterranean palace, resolved that his expedition should be uncommonly splendid. With this view he confiscated on all sides the property of his subjects, whilst his worthy mother stripped the seraglios she visited of the gems they contained. She collected all the sempstresses and embroiderers of Samarah and other cities to the distance of sixty leagues, to prepare pavilions, palanquins, sofas, canopies, and litters for the train of the Monarch. There was not left in Masulipatam a single piece of chintz, and so much muslin had been bought up to dress out Bababalouk and the other black eunuchs, that there remained not an ell in the whole Irak of Babylon.

During these preparations Carathis, who never lost sight of her great object, which was to obtain favour with the Powers of darkness, made select parties of the fairest and most delicate ladies of the city; but in the midst of their gaiety she contrived to introduce serpents amongst them, and to break pots of scorpions under the table; they all bit to a wonder; and Carathis would have left them to bite, were it not that, to fill up the time, she now and then amused herself in curing their wounds with an excellent anodyne of her own invention, for this good Princess abhorred being indolent.

Vathek, who was not altogether so active as his mother, devoted his time to the sole gratification of his senses, in the palaces which were severally dedicated to them; he disgusted himself no more with the Divan or the Mosque. One half of

Samarah followed his example, whilst the other lamented the progress of corruption.

In the midst of these transactions, the embassy returned which had been sent in pious times to Mecca. It consisted of the most reverend Moullahs, who had fulfilled their commission and brought back one of those precious besoms which are used to sweep the sacred Caaba; a present truly worthy of the greatest potentate on earth!

The Caliph happened at this instant to be engaged in an apartment by no means adapted to the reception of embassies, though adorned with a certain magnificence, not only to render it agreeable, but also because he resorted to it frequently, and stayed a considerable time together. Whilst occupied in this retreat, he heard the voice of Bababalouk calling out from between the door and the tapestry that hung before it: "Here are the excellent Mahomet Ebn Edris al Shafei, and the seraphic Al Mouhadethin, who have brought the besom from Mecca, and with tears of joy intreat they may present it to your majesty in person."

"Let them bring the besom hither; it may be of use," said Vathek, who was still employed, not having quite racked off his wine.

"How!" answered Bababalouk, half aloud and amazed.

"Obey," replied the Caliph, "for it is my sovereign will; go instantly, vanish; for here will I receive the good folk, who have thus filled thee with joy."

The eunuch departed muttering, and bade the venerable train attend him. A sacred rapture was diffused amongst these reverend old men. Though fatigued with the length of their expedition, they followed Bababalouk with an alertness almost miraculous, and felt themselves highly flattered, as they swept along the stately porticoes, that the Caliph would not receive them like ambassadors in ordinary in his hall of audience. Soon reaching the interior of the harem (where, through blinds of Persian, they perceived large soft eyes, dark and blue, that went and came like lightning), penetrated with respect and wonder, and full of their celestial mission, they advanced in procession towards the small corridors that appeared to terminate in nothing, but nevertheless led to the cell where the Caliph expected their coming.

"What! is the Commander of the faithful sick?" said Ebn Edris al Shafei in a low voice to his companion.

"I rather think he is in his oratory," answered Al Mouhadethin.

Vathek, who heard the dialogue, cried out: "What imports it you how I am employed? approach without delay."

They advanced, and Bababalouk almost sunk with confusion, whilst the Caliph, without showing himself, put forth his hand from behind the tapestry that hung before the door, and demanded of them the besom. Having prostrated themselves as well as the corridor would permit, and even in a tolerable semicircle, the venerable Al Shafei, drawing forth the besom from the embroidered and perfumed scarves in which it had been enveloped and secured from the profane gaze of vulgar eyes, arose from his associates, and advanced with an air of the most awful solemnity towards the supposed oratory; but with what astonishment! with what horror was he seized! Vathek, bursting out into a villainous laugh, snatched the besom from his trembling hand, and, fixing upon some cobwebs that hung suspended from the ceiling, gravely brushed away till not a single one remained. The old men, overpowered with amazement, were unable to lift their beards from the ground; for, as Vathek had carelessly left the tapestry between them half drawn, they were witnesses to the whole transaction; their tears gushed forth on the marble, Al Mouhadethin swooned through mortification and fatigue, whilst the Caliph, throwing himself backward on his seat, shouted and clapped his hands without mercy. At last, addressing himself to Bababalouk: "My dear black," said he, "go, regale these pious poor souls with my good wine from Shiraz; and, as they can boast of having seen more of my palace than any one besides, let them also visit my office courts, and lead them out by the back steps that go to my stables." Having said this he threw the besom in their face, and went to enjoy the laugh with Carathis. Bababalouk did all in his power to console the ambassadors, but the two most infirm expired on the spot; the rest were carried to their beds, from whence, being heart-broken with sorrow and shame, they never arose.

The succeeding night Vathek, attended by his mother, ascended the tower to see if everything were ready for his journey; for he had great faith in the influence of the stars. The planets appeared in their most favourable aspects. The Caliph, to enjoy so flattering a sight, supped gaily on the roof,

and fancied that he heard during his repast loud shouts of laughter resound through the sky, in a manner that inspired the fullest assurance.

All was in motion at the palace; lights were kept burning through the whole of the night; the sound of implements and of artisans finishing their work, the voices of women and their guardians who sung at their embroidery, all conspired to interrupt the stillness of nature and infinitely delight the heart of Vathek, who imagined himself going in triumph to sit upon the throne of Soliman.

The people were not less satisfied than himself; all assisted to accelerate the moment which should rescue them from the wayward caprices of so extravagant a master.

The day preceding the departure of this infatuated Prince was employed by Carathis in repeating to him the decrees of the mysterious parchment, which she had thoroughly gotten by heart, and in recommending him not to enter the habitation of any one by the way; "for well thou knowest," added she, "how liquorish thy taste is after good dishes and young damsels; let me, therefore, enjoin thee to be content with thy old cooks, who are the best in the world, and not to forget that in thy ambulatory seraglio there are three dozen pretty faces, which Bababalouk hath not yet unveiled. I myself have a great desire to watch over thy conduct, and visit the subterranean palace, which no doubt contains whatever can interest persons like us; there is nothing so pleasing as retiring to caverns; my taste for dead bodies and everything like mummy is decided, and I am confident thou wilt see the most exquisite of their kind. Forget me not then, but the moment thou art in possession of the talismans which are to open to thee the mineral kingdoms and the centre of the earth itself, fail not to dispatch some trusty genius to take me and my cabinet, for the oil of the serpents I have pinched to death will be a pretty present to the Giaour, who cannot but be charmed with such dainties."

Scarcely had Carathis ended this edifying discourse, when the sun, setting behind the mountain of the Four Fountains, gave place to the rising moon; this planet being that evening at full appeared of unusual beauty and magnitude in the eyes of the women, the eunuchs, and the pages, who were all impatient to set forward. The city re-echoed with shouts of joy

and flourishing of trumpets; nothing was visible but plumes nodding on pavilions, and aigrets shining in the mild lustre of the moon; the spacious square resembled an immense parterre, variegated with the most stately tulips of the East.

Arrayed in the robes which were only worn at the most distinguished ceremonials, and supported by his Vizier and Bababalouk, the Caliph descended the grand staircase of the tower in the sight of all his people; he could not forbear pausing at intervals to admire the superb appearance which everywhere courted his view, whilst the whole multitude, even to the camels with their sumptuous burthens, knelt down before him. For some time a general stillness prevailed, which nothing happened to disturb but the shrill screams of some eunuchs in the rear; these vigilant guards, having remarked certain cages of the ladies swagging somewhat awry, and discovered that a few adventurous gallants had contrived to get in, soon dislodged the enraptured culprits, and consigned them with good commendations to the surgeons of the serail. The majesty of so magnificent a spectacle was not, however, violated by incidents like these. Vathek meanwhile saluted the moon with an idolatrous air, that neither pleased Morakanabad nor the Doctors of the law, any more than the viziers and the grandees of his court, who were all assembled to enjoy the last view of their Sovereign.

At length the clarions and trumpets from the top of the tower announced the prelude of departure; though the instruments were in unison with each other, yet a singular dissonance was blended with their sounds; this proceeded from Carathis, who was singing her direful orisons to the Giaour, whilst the negresses and mutes supplied thorough-bass without articulating a word. The good Mussulmans fancied that they heard the sullen hum of those nocturnal insects which presage evil, and importuned Vathek to beware how he ventured his sacred person.

On a given signal the great standard of the Califat was displayed, twenty thousand lances shone around it, and the Caliph, treading loyally on the cloth of gold which had been spread for his feet, ascended his litter amidst the general awe that possessed his subjects.

The expedition commenced with the utmost order, and so entire a silence, that even the locusts were heard from the

thickets on the plain of Catoul. Gaiety and good-humour prevailing, six good leagues were passed before the dawn; and the morning star was still glittering in the firmament when the whole of this numerous train had halted on the banks of the Tigris, where they encamped to repose for the rest of the day.

The three days that followed were spent in the same manner; but on the fourth the heavens looked angry, lightnings broke forth in frequent flashes, re-echoing peals of thunder succeeded, and the trembling Circassians clung with all their might to their ugly guardians. The Caliph himself was greatly inclined to take shelter in the large town of Gulchissar, the governor of which came forth to meet him, and tendered every kind of refreshment the place could supply; but, having examined his tablets, he suffered the rain to soak him almost to the bone, notwithstanding the importunity of his first favourites. Though he began to regret the palace of the senses, yet he lost not sight of his enterprise, and his sanguine expectations confirmed his resolution; his geographers were ordered to attend him, but the weather proved so terrible that these poor people exhibited a lamentable appearance; and, as no long journeys had been undertaken since the time of Haroun al Raschid, their maps of the different countries were in a still worse plight than themselves; every one was ignorant which way to turn; for Vathek, though well versed in the course of the heavens, no longer knew his situation on earth; he thundered even louder than the elements, and muttered forth certain hints of the bow-string, which were not very soothing to literary ears. Disgusted at the toilsome weariness of the way, he determined to cross over the craggy heights and follow the guidance of a peasant, who undertook to bring him in four days to Rocnabad. Remonstrances were all to no purpose; his resolution was fixed, and an invasion commenced on the province of the goats, who sped away in large troops before them. It was curious to view on these half-calcined rocks camels richly caparisoned, and pavilions of gold and silk waving on their summits, which till then had never been covered but with sapless thistles and fern.

The females and eunuchs uttered shrill wailings at the sight of the precipices below them, and the dreary prospects that opened in the vast gorges of the mountains. Before they could reach the ascent of the steepest rock night overtook

them, and a boisterous tempest arose which, having rent the awnings of the palanquins and cages, exposed to the raw gusts the poor ladies within, who had never before felt so piercing a cold. The dark clouds that overcast the face of the sky deepened the horrors of this disastrous night, insomuch that nothing could be heard distinctly but the mewling of pages and lamentations of sultanas.

To increase the general misfortune, the frightful uproar of wild beasts resounded at a distance, and there were soon perceived in the forest they were skirting the glaring of eyes which could belong only to devils or tigers. The pioneers, who as well as they could had marked out a track, and a part of the advanced guard, were devoured before they had been in the least apprized of their danger. The confusion that prevailed was extreme; wolves, tigers, and other carnivorous animals, invited by the howling of their companions, flocked together from every quarter; the crashing of bones was heard on all sides, and a fearful rush of wings overhead, for now vultures also began to be of the party.

The terror at length reached the main body of the troops which surrounded the monarch and his harem, at the distance of two leagues from the scene. Vathek (voluptuously reposed in his capacious litter upon cushions of silk, with two little pages beside him of complexions more fair than the enamel of Franguestan, who were occupied in keeping off flies) was soundly asleep, and contemplating in his dreams the treasures of Soliman. The shrieks however of his wives awoke him with a start, and, instead of the Giaour with his key of gold, he beheld Bababalouk full of consternation.

"Sire," exclaimed this good servant of the most potent of monarchs, "misfortune is arrived at its height; wild beasts, who entertain no more reverence for your sacred person than for that of a dead ass, have beset your camels and their drivers; thirty of the richest laden are already become their prey, as well as your confectioners, your cooks, and purveyors; and, unless our holy Prophet should protect us, we shall have all eaten our last meal."

At the mention of eating the Caliph lost all patience; he began to bellow and even beat himself (for there was no seeing in the dark). The rumour every instant increased, and Bababalouk, finding no good could be done with his master,

stopped both his ears against the hurly-burly of the harem, and called out aloud: "Come, ladies and brothers! all hands to work; strike light in a moment! never shall it be said that the Commander of the faithful served to regale these infidel brutes."

Though there wanted not in this bevy of beauties a sufficient number of capricious and wayward, yet on the present occasion they were all compliance; fires were visible in a twinkling in all their cages; ten thousand torches were lighted at once; the Caliph himself seized a large one of wax; every person followed his example, and, by kindling ropes' ends dipped in oil and fastened on poles, an amazing blaze was spread. The rocks were covered with the splendour of sunshine; the trails of sparks wafted by the wind communicated to the dry fern, of which there was plenty. Serpents were observed to crawl forth from their retreats with amazement and hissings, whilst the horses snorted, stamped the ground, tossed their noses in the air, and plunged about without mercy.

One of the forests of cedar that bordered their way took fire, and the branches that overhung the path, extending their flames to the muslins and chintzes which covered the cages of the ladies, obliged them to jump out at the peril of their necks. Vathek, who vented on the occasion a thousand blasphemies, was himself compelled to touch with his sacred feet the naked earth.

Never had such an incident happened before. Full of mortification, shame, and despondence, and not knowing how to walk, the ladies fell into the dirt. "Must I go on foot!" said one; "Must I wet my feet!" cried another; "Must I soil my dress!" asked a third; "Execrable Bababalouk!" exclaimed all; "Outcast of hell! what hadst thou to do with torches? Better were it to be eaten by tigers than to fall into our present condition! we are for ever undone! Not a porter is there in the army, nor a currier of camels, but hath seen some part of our bodies, and what is worse, our very faces!" On saying this the most bashful amongst them hid their foreheads on the ground, whilst such as had more boldness flew at Bababalouk; but he, well apprized of their humour and not wanting in shrewdness, betook himself to his heels along with his comrades, all dropping their torches and striking their tymbals.

It was not less light than in the brightest of the dog-days, and the weather was hot in proportion; but how degrading was the spectacle, to behold the Caliph bespattered like an ordinary mortal! As the exercise of his faculties seemed to be suspended, one of his Ethiopian wives (for he delighted in variety) clasped him in her arms, threw him upon her shoulder like a sack of dates, and, finding that the fire was hemming them in, set off with no small expedition, considering the weight of her burden. The other ladies, who had just learnt the use of their feet, followed her; their guards galloped after, and the camel-drivers brought up the rear as fast as their charge would permit.

They soon reached the spot where the wild beasts had commenced the carnage, and which they had too much spirit to leave, notwithstanding the approaching tumult and the luxurious supper they had made; Bababalouk nevertheless seized on a few of the plumpest, which were unable to budge from the place, and began to flay them with admirable adroitness. The cavalcade being got so far from the conflagration as that the heat felt rather grateful than violent, it was immediately resolved on to halt. The tattered chintzes were picked up, the scraps left by the wolves and tigers interred, and vengeance was taken on some dozens of vultures that were too much glutted to rise on the wing. The camels, which had been left unmolested to make sal ammoniac, being numbered, and the ladies once more enclosed in their cages, the imperial tent was pitched on the levellest ground they could find.

Vathek, reposing upon a mattress of down, and tolerably recovered from the jolting of the Ethiopian, who to his feelings seemed the roughest trotting jade he had hitherto mounted, called out for something to eat. But alas! those delicate cakes which had been baked in silver ovens for his royal mouth, those rich manchets, amber comfits, flagons of Shiraz wine, porcelain vases of snow, and grapes from the banks of the Tigris, were all irremediably lost! And nothing had Bababalouk to present in their stead but a roasted wolf, vultures *à la daube*, aromatic herbs of the most acrid poignancy, rotten truffles, boiled thistles, and such other wild plants as must ulcerate the throat and parch up the tongue. Nor was he better provided in the article of drink, for he could procure nothing to accompany these irritating viands but a few vials of

abominable brandy, which had been secreted by the scullions in their slippers.

Vathek made wry faces at so savage a repast, and Bababalouk answered them with shrugs and contortions; the Caliph, however, eat with tolerable appetite, and fell into a nap that lasted six hours. The splendour of the sun reflected from the white cliffs of the mountains, in spite of the curtains that enclosed him, at length disturbed his repose; he awoke terrified, and stung to the quick by those wormwood-colour flies, which emit from their wings a suffocating stench. The miserable Monarch was perplexed how to act, though his wits were not idle in seeking expedients, whilst Bababalouk lay snoring amidst a swarm of those insects, that busily thronged to pay court to his nose. The little pages, famished with hunger, had dropped their fans on the ground, and exerted their dying voices in bitter reproaches on the Caliph, who now for the first time heard the language of truth.

Thus stimulated, he renewed his imprecations against the Giaour, and bestowed upon Mahomet some soothing expressions. "Where am I?" cried he; "what are these dreadful rocks? these valleys of darkness? are we arrived at the horrible Kaf? is the Simurgh coming to pluck out my eyes, as a punishment for undertaking this impious enterprise?" Having said this he bellowed like a calf, and turned himself towards an outlet in the side of his pavilion; but alas! what objects occurred to his view? on one side a plain of black sand that appeared to be unbounded, and on the other perpendicular crags, bristled over with those abominable thistles which had so severely lacerated his tongue. He fancied, however, that he perceived, amongst the brambles and briers, some gigantic flowers, but was mistaken; for these were only the dangling palampores and variegated tatters of his gay retinue. As there were several clefts in the rock from whence water seemed to have flowed, Vathek applied his ear with the hope of catching the sound of some latent runnel, but could only distinguish the low murmurs of his people, who were repining at their journey, and complaining for the want of water.

"To what purpose," asked they, "have we been brought hither? hath our Caliph another tower to build? or have the relentless Afrits, whom Carathis so much loves, fixed in this place their abode?"

At the name of Carathis Vathek recollected the tablets he had received from his mother, who assured him they were fraught with preternatural qualities, and advised him to consult them as emergencies might require. Whilst he was engaged in turning them over, he heard a shout of joy and a loud clapping of hands; the curtains of his pavilion were soon drawn back, and he beheld Bababalouk, followed by a troop of his favourites, conducting two dwarfs, each a cubit high, who brought between them a large basket of melons, oranges, and pomegranates. They were singing in the sweetest tones the words that follow:

"We dwell on the top of these rocks in a cabin of rushes and canes; the eagles envy us our nest; a small spring supplies us with Abdest, and we daily repeat prayers which the Prophet approves. We love you, O Commander of the faithful! our master, the good Emir Fakreddin, loves you also; he reveres in your person the vicegerent of Mahomet. Little as we are, in us he confides; he knows our hearts to be good as our bodies are contemptible, and hath placed us here to aid those who are bewildered on these dreary mountains. Last night, whilst we were occupied within our cell in reading the holy Koran, a sudden hurricane blew out our lights and rocked our habitation; for two whole hours a palpable darkness prevailed, but we heard sounds at a distance which we conjectured to proceed from the bells of a Cafila passing over the rocks; our ears were soon filled with deplorable shrieks, frightful roarings, and the sound of tymbals. Chilled with terror, we concluded that the Deggial, with his exterminating angels, had sent forth their plagues on the earth. In the midst of these melancholy reflections we perceived flames of the deepest red glow in the horizon, and found ourselves in a few moments covered with flakes of fire; amazed at so strange an appearance, we took up the volume dictated by the blessed Intelligence, and, kneeling by the light of the fire that surrounded us, we recited the verse which says: 'Put no trust in anything but the mercy of Heaven; there is no help save in the holy Prophet; the mountain of Kaf itself may tremble, it is the power of Alla only that cannot be moved.' After having pronounced these words we felt consolation, and our minds were hushed into a sacred repose; silence ensued, and our ears clearly distinguished a voice in the air, saying: 'Servants

of my faithful servant! go down to the happy valley of Fakreddin; tell him that an illustrious opportunity now offers to satiate the thirst of his hospitable heart. The Commander of true believers is this day bewildered amongst these mountains, and stands in need of thy aid.' We obeyed with joy the angelic mission, and our master, filled with pious zeal, hath culled with his own hands these melons, oranges, and pomegranates; he is following us with a hundred dromedaries laden with the purest waters of his fountains, and is coming to kiss the fringe of your consecrated robe, and implore you to enter his humble habitation, which, placed amidst these barren wilds, resembles an emerald set in lead." The dwarfs, having ended their address, remained still standing, and, with hands crossed upon their bosoms, preserved a respectful silence.

Vathek in the midst of this curious harangue seized the basket, and long before it was finished the fruits had dissolved in his mouth; as he continued to eat his piety increased, and in the same breath which recited his prayers he called for the Koran and sugar.

Such was the state of his mind when the tablets, which were thrown by at the approach of the dwarfs, again attracted his eye; he took them up, but was ready to drop on the ground when he beheld, in large red characters, these words inscribed by Carathis, which were indeed enough to make him tremble—

"Beware of thy old doctors, and their puny messengers of but one cubit high; distrust their pious frauds, and, instead of eating their melons, impale on a spit the bearers of them. Shouldest thou be such a fool as to visit them, the portal of the subterranean palace will be shut in thy face, and with such force as shall shake thee asunder; thy body shall be spit upon, and bats will engender in thy belly."

"To what tends this ominous rhapsody?" cries the Caliph; "and must I then perish in these deserts with thirst, whilst I may refresh myself in the valley of melons and cucumbers? Accursed be the Giaour, with his portal of ebony! he hath made me dance attendance too long already. Besides, who shall prescribe laws to me? I forsooth must not enter any one's habitation! Be it so; but what can I enter that is not my own!"

Bababalouk, who lost not a syllable of this soliloquy, applauded it with all his heart, and the ladies for the first time agreed with him in opinion.

The dwarfs were entertained, caressed, and seated with great ceremony on little cushions of satin. The symmetry of their persons was the subject of criticism; not an inch of them was suffered to pass unexamined; knick-knacks and dainties were offered in profusion, but all were declined with respectful gravity. They clambered up the sides of the Caliph's seat, and, placing themselves each on one of his shoulders, began to whisper prayers in his ears; their tongues quivered like the leaves of a poplar, and the patience of Vathek was almost exhausted, when the acclamations of the troops announced the approach of Fakreddin, who was come with a hundred old greybeards and as many Korans and dromedaries; they instantly set about their ablutions, and began to repeat the Bismillah; Vathek, to get rid of these officious monitors, followed their example, for his hands were burning.

The good Emir, who was punctiliously religious and likewise a great dealer in compliments, made an harangue five times more prolix and insipid than his harbingers had already delivered. The Caliph, unable any longer to refrain, exclaimed: "For the love of Mahomet, my dear Fakreddin, have done! let us proceed to your valley, and enjoy the fruits that Heaven hath vouchsafed you."

The hint of proceeding put all into motion; the venerable attendants of the Emir set forward somewhat slowly, but Vathek, having ordered his little pages in private to goad on the dromedaries, loud fits of laughter broke forth from the cages, for the unwieldy curveting of these poor beasts, and the ridiculous distress of their superannuated riders, afforded the ladies no small entertainment.

They descended, however, unhurt into the valley, by the large steps which the Emir had cut in the rock; and already the murmuring of streams and the rustling of leaves began to catch their attention. The cavalcade soon entered a path which was skirted by flowering shrubs, and extended to a vast wood of palm-trees, whose branches overspread a building of hewn stone. This edifice was crowned with nine domes, and adorned with as many portals of bronze, on which was engraven the following inscription: "This is the asylum of pilgrims, the refuge of travellers, and the depository of secrets for all parts of the world."

Nine pages, beautiful as the day, and clothed in robes of

Egyptian linen, very long and very modest, were standing at each door. They received the whole retinue with an easy and inviting air. Four of the most amiable placed the Caliph on a magnificent taktrevan; four others, somewhat less graceful, took charge of Bababalouk, who capered for joy at the snug little cabin that fell to his share; the pages that remained waited on the rest of the train.

When everything masculine was gone out of sight, the gate of a large enclosure on the right turned on its harmonious hinges, and a young female of a slender form came forth; her light brown hair floated in the hazy breeze of the twilight; a troop of young maidens, like the Pleiades, attended her on tip-toe. They hastened to the pavilions that contained the sultanas, and the young lady, gracefully bending, said to them:

"Charming Princesses, everything is ready; we have prepared beds for your repose, and strewed your apartments with jasmine; no insects will keep off slumber from visiting your eyelids, we will dispel them with a thousand plumes; come then, amiable ladies! refresh your delicate feet and your ivory limbs in baths of rose water; and, by the light of perfumed lamps, your servants will amuse you with tales."

The sultanas accepted with pleasure these obliging offers, and followed the young lady to the Emir's harem, where we must for a moment leave them and return to the Caliph.

Vathek found himself beneath a vast dome, illuminated by a thousand lamps of rock crystal; as many vases of the same material, filled wtth excellent sherbet, sparkled on a large table, where a profusion of viands were spread; amongst others were sweetbreads stewed in milk of almonds, saffron soups, and lamb *à la crême*, of all which the Caliph was amazingly fond. He took of each as much as he was able, testified his sense of the Emir's friendship by the gaiety of his heart, and made the dwarfs dance against their will, for these little devotees durst not refuse the Commander of the faithful; at last he spread himself on the sofa, and slept sounder than he had ever before.

Beneath this dome a general silence prevailed, for there was nothing to disturb it but the jaws of Bababalouk, who had untrussed himself to eat with greater advantage, being anxious to make amends for his fast in the mountains. As his spirits

were too high to admit of his sleeping, and not loving to be idle, he proposed with himself to visit the harem, and repair to his charge of the ladies, to examine if they had been properly lubricated with the balm of Mecca, if their eyebrows and tresses were in order, and, in a word, to perform all the little offices they might need. He sought for a long time together, but without being able to find out the door; he durst not speak aloud for fear of disturbing the Caliph, and not a soul was stirring in the precincts of the palace; he almost despaired of effecting his purpose, when a low whispering just reached his ear; it came from the dwarfs, who were returned to their old occupation, and, for the nine hundred and ninety-ninth time in their lives, were reading over the Koran. They very politely invited Bababalouk to be of their party, but his head was full of other concerns. The dwarfs, though scandalized at his dissolute morals, directed him to the apartments he wanted to find; his way thither lay through a hundred dark corridors, along which he groped as he went, and at last began to catch, from the extremity of a passage, the charming gossiping of the women, which not a little delighted his heart. "Ah, ha! what, not yet asleep?" cried he; and, taking long strides as he spoke, "did you not suspect me of abjuring my charge? I stayed but to finish what my master had left."

Two of the black eunuchs, on hearing a voice so loud, detached a party in haste, sabre in hand, to discover the cause; but presently was repeated on all sides: "'Tis only Bababalouk! no one but Bababalouk!" This circumspect guardian, having gone up to a thin veil of carnation-coloured silk that hung before the doorway, distinguished, by means of the softened splendour that shone through it, an oval bath of dark porphyry, surrounded by curtains festooned in large folds; through the apertures between them, as they were not drawn close, groups of young slaves were visible, amongst whom Bababalouk perceived his pupils, indulgingly expanding their arms, as if to embrace the perfumed water and refresh themselves after their fatigues. The looks of tender languor, their confidential whispers, and the enchanting smiles with which they were imparted, the exquisite fragrance of the roses, all combined to inspire a voluptuousness, which even Bababalouk himself was scarce able to withstand.

He summoned up however his usual solemnity, and, in the

peremptory tone of authority, commanded the ladies instantly to leave the bath. Whilst he was issuing these mandates, the young Nouronihar, daughter of the Emir, who was sprightly as an antelope, and full of wanton gaiety, beckoned one of her slaves to let down the great swing, which was suspended to the ceiling by cords of silk, and whilst this was doing, winked to her companions in the bath, who, chagrined to be forced from so soothing a state of indolence, began to twist it round Bababalouk, and tease him with a thousand vagaries.

When Nouronihar perceived that he was exhausted with fatigue, she accosted him with an arch air of respectful concern and said: "My Lord! it is not by any means decent, that the chief eunuch of the Caliph, our Sovereign, should thus continue standing; deign but to recline your graceful person upon this sofa, which will burst with vexation, if it have not the honour to receive you."

Caught by these flattering accents, Bababalouk gallantly replied: "Delight of the apple of my eye! I accept the invitation of thy honeyed lips; and, to say truth, my senses are dazzled with the radiance that beams from thy charms."

"Repose then at your ease," replied the beauty, and placed him on the pretended sofa, which, quicker than lightning, gave way all at once. The rest of the women, having aptly conceived her design, sprang naked from the bath, and plied the swing with such unmerciful jerks, that it swept through the whole compass of a very lofty dome, and took from the poor victim all power of respiration; sometimes his feet rased the surface of the water, and at others the skylight almost flattened his nose; in vain did he pierce the air with the cries of a voice that resembled the ringing of a cracked basin, for their peals of laughter were still more predominant.

Nouronihar, in the inebriety of youthful spirits, being used only to eunuchs of ordinary harems, and having never seen anything so royal and disgusting, was far more diverted than all of the rest; she began to parody some Persian verses, and sung with an accent most demurely piquant:

> "O gentle white dove, as thou soar'st through the air,
> Vouchsafe one kind glance on the mate of thy love;
> Melodious Philomel, I am thy rose;
> Warble some couplet to ravish my heart!"

The sultanas and their slaves, stimulated by these pleasan-

tries, persevered at the swing with such unremitted assiduity, that at length the cord which had secured it snapt suddenly asunder, and Bababalouk fell floundering like a turtle to the bottom of the bath. This accident occasioned a universal shout; twelve little doors, till now unobserved, flew open at once, and the ladies in an instant made their escape, after throwing all the towels on his head, and putting out the lights that remained.

The deplorable animal, in water to the chin, overwhelmed with darkness, and unable to extricate himself from the wrap that embarrassed him, was still doomed to hear for his further consolation the fresh bursts of merriment his disaster occasioned. He bustled, but in vain, to get from the bath, for the margin was become so slippery with the oil spilt in breaking the lamps, that at every effort he slid back with a plunge, which resounded aloud through the hollow of the dome. These cursed peals of laughter at every relapse were redoubled; and he, who thought the place infested rather by devils than women, resolved to cease groping and abide in the bath, where he amused himself with soliloquies, interspersed with imprecations, of which his malicious neighbours reclining on down suffered not an accent to escape. In this delectable plight the morning surprised him. The Caliph, wondering at his absence, had caused him to be everywhere sought for. At last he was drawn forth, almost smothered from the wisp of linen, and wet even to the marrow. Limping and chattering his teeth, he appeared before his master, who inquired what was the matter, and how he came soused in so strange a pickle.

"And why did you enter this cursed lodge?" answered Bababalouk, gruffly. "Ought a monarch like you to visit with his harem the abode of a grey-bearded emir, who knows nothing of life? And with what gracious damsels doth the place, too, abound! Fancy to yourself how they have soaked me like a burnt crust, and made me dance like a jack-pudding the live-long night through, on their damnable swing. What an excellent lesson for your sultanas to follow, into whom I have instilled such reserve and decorum!"

Vathek, comprehending not a syllable of all this invective, obliged him to relate minutely the transaction; but, instead of sympathizing with the miserable sufferer, he laughed im-

moderately at the device of the swing, and the figure of Bababalouk mounting upon it. The stung eunuch could scarcely preserve the semblance of respect.

"Ay, laugh, my Lord! laugh," said he; "but I wish this Nouronihar would play some trick on you; she is too wicked to spare even majesty itself."

Those words made for the present but a slight impression on the Caliph; but they not long after recurred to his mind.

This conversation was cut short by Fakreddin, who came to request that Vathek would join in the prayers and ablutions to be solemnized on a spacious meadow, watered by innumerable streams. The Caliph found the waters refreshing, but the prayers abominably irksome; he diverted himself, however, with the multitude of Calenders, Santons, and Dervises, who were continually coming and going, but especially with the Brahmins, Fakirs, and other enthusiasts, who had travelled from the heart of India, and halted on their way with the Emir. These latter had, each of them, some mummery peculiar to himself. One dragged a huge chain wherever he went, another an orang-outang, whilst a third was furnished with scourges, and all performed to a charm; some clambered up trees, holding one foot in the air; others poised themselves over a fire, and without mercy filliped their noses. There were some amongst them that cherished vermin, which were not ungrateful in requiting their caresses. These rambling fanatics revolted the hearts of the Dervises, the Calenders, and Santons; however, the vehemence of their aversion soon subsided, under the hope that the presence of the Caliph would cure their folly, and convert them to the Mussulman faith; but alas! how great was their disappointment! for Vathek, instead of preaching to them, treated them as buffoons, bade them present his compliments to Visnow and Ixhora, and discovered a predilection for a squat old man from the isle of Serendib, who was more ridiculous than any of the rest.

"Come!" said he, "for the love of your gods bestow a few slaps on your chops to amuse me."

The old fellow, offended at such an address, began loudly to weep; but, as he betrayed a villainous drivelling in his tears, the Caliph turned his back and listened to Bababalouk, who whispered, whilst he held the umbrella over him: "Your Majesty should be cautious of this odd assembly, which hath

been collected I know not for what. Is it necessary to exhibit such spectacles to a mighty Potentate, with interludes of Talapoins more mangy than dogs? Were I you I would command a fire to be kindled, and at once purge the earth of the Emir, his harem, and all his menagerie."

"Tush, dolt," answered Vathek; "and know that all this infinitely charms me; nor shall I leave the meadow till I have visited every hive of these pious mendicants."

Wherever the Caliph directed his course objects of pity were sure to swarm round him; the blind, the purblind, smarts without noses, damsels without ears, each to extol the munificence of Fakreddin, who, as well as his attendant greybeards, dealt about gratis plasters and cataplasms to all that applied. At noon a superb corps of cripples made its appearance, and soon after advanced by platoons on the plain, the completest association of invalids that had ever been embodied till then. The blind went groping with the blind, the lame limped on together, and the maimed made gestures to each other with the only arm that remained; the sides of a considerable waterfall were crowded by the deaf, amongst whom were some from Pegû with ears uncommonly handsome and large, but were still less able to hear than the rest; nor were there wanting others in abundance with hump-backs, wenny necks, and even horns of an exquisite polish.

The Emir, to aggrandize the solemnity of the festival in honour of his illustrious visitant, ordered the turf to be spread on all sides with skins and table-cloths, upon which were served up for the good Mussulmans pilaus of every hue, with other orthodox dishes; and, by the express order of Vathek, who was shamefully tolerant, small plates of abominations for regaling the rest. This Prince, on seeing so many mouths put in motion, began to think it time for employing his own; in spite therefore of every remonstrance from the chief of his eunuchs, he resolved to have a dinner dressed on the spot. The complaisant Emir immediately gave orders for a table to be placed in the shade of the willows. The first service consisted of fish, which they drew from a river flowing over sands of gold at the foot of a lofty hill; these were broiled as fast as taken, and served up with a sauce of vinegar and small herbs that grew on Mount Sinai; for everything with the Emir was excellent and pious.

The dessert was not quite set on when the sound of lutes from the hill was repeated by the echoes of the neighbouring mountains. The Caliph, with an emotion of pleasure and surprise, had no sooner raised up his head than a handful of jasmine dropped on his face; an abundance of tittering succeeded the frolic, and instantly appeared through the bushes the elegant forms of several young females, skipping and bounding like roes. The fragrance diffused from their hair struck the sense of Vathek, who, in an ecstasy, suspending his repast, said to Bababalouk:

"Are the Peries come down from their spheres? Note her in particular whose form is so perfect, venturously running on the brink of the precipice, and turning back her head, as regardless of nothing but the graceful flow of her robe; with what captivating impatience doth she contend with the bushes for her veil! could it be she who threw the jasmine at me?"

"Ay! she it was; and you too would she throw from the top of the rock," answered Bababalouk; "for that is my good friend Nouronihar, who so kindly lent me her swing; my dear lord and master," added he, twisting a twig that hung by the rind from a willow, "let me correct her for her want of respect; the Emir will have no reason to complain, since (bating what I owe to his piety) he is much to be censured for keeping a troop of girls on the mountains, whose sharp air gives their blood too brisk a circulation."

"Peace, blasphemer," said the Caliph; "speak not thus of her, who over her mountains leads my heart a willing captive; contrive rather that my eyes may be fixed upon hers, that I may respire her sweet breath, as she bounds panting along these delightful wilds!" On saying these words Vathek extended his arms towards the hill, and directing his eyes with an anxiety unknown to him before, endeavoured to keep within view the object that enthralled his soul; but her course was as difficult to follow as the flight of one of those beautiful blue butterflies of Cashmere, which are at once so volatile and rare.

The Caliph, not satisfied with seeing, wished also to hear Nouronihar, and eagerly turned to catch the sound of her voice; at last he distinguished her whispering to one of her companions behind the thicket from whence she had thrown the jasmine: "A Caliph it must be owned is a fine thing to see, but my little Gulchenrouz is much more amiable; one

lock of his hair is of more value to me than the richest embroidery of the Indies; I had rather that his teeth should mischievously press my finger than the richest ring of the imperial treasure; where have you left him, Sutlememe? and why is he now not here?"

The agitated Caliph still wished to hear more, but she immediately retired with all her attendants; the fond Monarch pursued her with his eyes till she was gone out of sight, and then continued like a bewildered and benighted traveller, from whom the clouds had obscured the constellation that guided his way; the curtain of night seemed dropped before him; everything appeared discoloured; the falling waters filled his soul with dejection, and his tears trickled down the jasmines he had caught from Nouronihar, and placed in his inflamed bosom; he snatched up a shining pebble, to remind him of the scene where he felt the first tumults of love. Two hours were elapsed, and evening drew on before he could resolve to depart from the place; he often, but in vain, attempted to go; a soft languor enervated the powers of his mind; extending himself on the brink of the stream, he turned his eyes towards the blue summits of the mountain and exclaimed: "What concealest thou behind thee? what is passing in thy solitudes? Whither is she gone? O heaven! perhaps she is now wandering in thy grottoes, with her happy Gulchenrouz!"

In the meantime the damps began to descend, and the Emir, solicitous for the health of the Caliph, ordered the imperial litter to be brought. Vathek, absorbed in his reveries, was imperceptibly removed, and conveyed back to the saloon that received him the evening before.

But let us leave the Caliph, immersed in his new passion, and attend Nouronihar beyond the rocks, where she had again joined her beloved Gulchenrouz. This Gulchenrouz was the son of Ali Hassan, brother to the Emir, and the most delicate and lovely creature in the world. Ali Hassan, who had been absent ten years on a voyage to the unknown seas, committed at his departure this child, the only survivor of many, to the care and protection of his brother. Gulchenrouz could write in various characters with precision, and paint upon vellum the most elegant arabesques that fancy could devise; his sweet voice accompanied the lute in the most enchanting manner, and when he sung the loves of Megnoun

and Leileh, or some unfortunate lovers of ancient days, tears insensibly overflowed the cheeks of his auditors; the verses he composed (for, like Megnoun, he too was a poet) inspired that unresisting languor so frequently fatal to the female heart; the women all doted upon him; for though he had passed his thirteenth year, they still detained him in the harem; his dancing was light as the gossamer waved by the zephyrs of spring, but his arms, which twined so gracefully with those of the young girls in the dance, could neither dart the lance in the chase, nor curb the steeds that pastured his uncle's domains. The bow, however, he drew with a certain aim, and would have excelled his competitors in the race, could he have broken the ties that bound him to Nouronihar.

The two brothers had mutually engaged their children to each other, and Nouronihar loved her cousin more than her eyes; both had the same tastes and amusements, the same long, languishing looks, the same tresses, the same fair complexions, and when Gulchenrouz appeared in the dress of his cousin he seemed to be more feminine than even herself. If at any time he left the harem to visit Fakreddin, it was with all the bashfulness of a fawn, that consciously ventures from the lair of its dam; he was, however, wanton enough to mock the solemn old greybeards to whom he was subject, though sure to be rated without mercy in return; whenever this happened he would plunge into the recesses of the harem, and sobbing take refuge in the arms of Nouronihar, who loved even his faults beyond the virtues of others.

It fell out this evening that, after leaving the Caliph in the meadow, she ran with Gulchenrouz over the green sward of the mountain that sheltered the vale where Fakreddin had chosen to reside. The sun was dilated on the edge of the horizon; and the young people, whose fancies were lively and inventive, imagined they beheld in the gorgeous clouds of the west the domes of Shadukiam and Ambreabad, where the Peries have fixed their abode. Nouronihar, sitting on the slope of the hill, supported on her knees the perfumed head of Gulchenrouz; the air was calm, and no sound stirred but the voices of other young girls, who were drawing cool water from the streams below. The unexpected arrival of the Caliph, and the splendour that marked his appearance, had already filled with emotion the ardent soul of Nouronihar; her vanity

irresistibly prompted her to pique the Prince's attention, and this she before took good care to effect whilst he picked up the jasmine she had thrown upon him. But when Gulchenrouz asked after the flowers he had culled for her bosom, Nouronihar was all in confusion; she hastily kissed his forehead, arose in a flutter, and walked with unequal steps on the border of the precipice. Night advanced, and the pure gold of the setting sun had yielded to a sanguine red, the glow of which, like the reflection of a burning furnace, flushed Nouronihar's animated countenance. Gulchenrouz, alarmed at the agitation of his cousin, said to her with a supplicating accent:

"Let us be gone; the sky looks portentous, the tamarisks tremble more than common, and the raw wind chills my very heart; come! let us be gone, 'tis a melancholy night!"

Then, taking hold of her hand, he drew it towards the path he besought her to go. Nouronihar unconsciously followed the attraction, for a thousand strange imaginations occupied her spirit; she passed the large round of honeysuckles, her favourite resort, without ever vouchsafing it a glance, yet Gulchenrouz could not help snatching off a few shoots in his way, though he ran as if a wild beast were behind.

The young females seeing him approach in such haste, and according to custom expecting a dance, instantly assembled in a circle and took each other by the hand; but Gulchenrouz, coming up out of breath, fell down at once on the grass. This accident struck with consternation the whole of this frolicsome party; whilst Nouronihar, half distracted, and overcome both by the violence of her exercise and the tumult of her thoughts, sunk feebly down at his side, cherished his cold hands in her bosom, and chafed his temples with a fragrant unguent. At length he came to himself, and, wrapping up his head in the robe of his cousin, entreated that she would not return to the harem; he was afraid of being snapped at by Shaban his tutor, a wrinkled old eunuch of a surly disposition; for having interrupted the stated walk of Nouronihar, he dreaded lest the churl should take it amiss. The whole of this sprightly group, sitting round upon a mossy knoll, began to entertain themselves with various pastimes, whilst their superintendents the eunuchs were gravely conversing at a distance. The nurse of the Emir's daughter, observing her pupil sit ruminating with her eyes on the ground, endeavoured to amuse her with divert-

ing tales, to which Gulchenrouz, who had already forgotten his inquietudes, listened with a breathless attention; he laughed, he clapped his hands, and passed a hundred little tricks on the whole of the company, without omitting the eunuchs, whom he provoked to run after him, in spite of their age and decrepitude.

During these occurrences the moon arose, the wind subsided, and the evening became so serene and inviting, that a resolution was taken to sup on the spot. Sutlememe, who excelled in dressing a salad, having filled large bowls of porcelain with eggs of small birds, curds turned with citron juice, slices of cucumber, and the inmost leaves of delicate herbs, handed it round from one to another, and gave each their shares in a large spoon of Cocknos. Gulchenrouz, nestling as usual in the bosom of Nouronihar, pouted out his vermilion little lips against the offer of Sutlememe, and would take it only from the hand of his cousin, on whose mouth he hung like a bee inebriated with the quintessence of flowers. One of the eunuchs ran to fetch melons, whilst others were employed in showering down almonds from the branches that overhung this amiable party.

In the midst of this festive scene there appeared a light on the top of the highest mountain, which attracted the notice of every eye; this light was not less bright than the moon when at full, and might have been taken for her, had it not been that the moon was already risen. The phenomenon occasioned a general surprise, and no one could conjecture the cause; it could not be a fire, for the light was clear and bluish, nor had meteors ever been seen of that magnitude or splendour. This strange light faded for a moment, and immediately renewed its brightness; it first appeared motionless at the foot of the rock, whence it darted in an instant to sparkle in a thicket of palm-trees; from thence it glided along the torrent, and at last fixed in a glen that was narrow and dark. The moment it had taken its direction, Gulchenrouz, whose heart always trembled at anything sudden or rare, drew Nouronihar by the robe, and anxiously requested her to return to the harem; the women were importunate in seconding the entreaty, but the curiosity of the Emir's daughter prevailed; she not only refused to go back, but resolved at all hazards to pursue the appearance. Whilst they were debating what was best to be

done, the light shot forth so dazzling a blaze, that they all fled away shrieking; Nouronihar followed them a few steps, but, coming to the turn of a little bye-path, stopped, and went back alone; as she ran with an alertness peculiar to herself, it was not long before she came to the place where they had just been supping. The globe of fire now appeared stationary in the glen, and burned in majestic stillness. Nouronihar, compressing her hands upon her bosom, hesitated for some moments to advance; the solitude of her situation was new, the silence of the night awful, and every object inspired sensations which till then she never had felt; the affright of Gulchenrouz recurred to her mind, and she a thousand times turned to go back, but this luminous appearance was always before her; urged on by an irresistible impulse she continued to approach it, in defiance of every obstacle that opposed her progress.

At length she arrived at the opening of the glen; but, instead of coming up to the light, she found herself surrounded by darkness, excepting that at a considerable distance a faint spark glimmered by fits. She stopped a second time; the sound of waterfalls mingling their murmurs, the hollow rustlings amongst the palm-branches, and the funereal screams of the birds from their rifted trunks, all conspired to fill her with terror; she imagined every moment that she trod on some venomous reptile; all the stories of malignant Divas and dismal Ghouls thronged into her memory; but her curiosity was, notwithstanding, more predominant than her fears; she therefore firmly entered a winding track that led towards the spark, but, being a stranger to the path, she had not gone far till she began to repent of her rashness.

"Alas!" said she, "that I were but in those secure and illuminated apartments where my evenings glided on with Gulchenrouz! Dear child! how would thy heart flutter with terror wert thou wandering in these wild solitudes like me!" At the close of this apostrophe she regained her road, and, coming to steps hewn out in the rock, ascended them undismayed; the light, which was now gradually enlarging, appeared above her on the summit of the mountain; at length she distinguished a plaintive and melodious union of voices, proceeding from a sort of cavern, that resembled the dirges which are sung over tombs; a sound, likewise, like that which arises from the filling of baths, at the same time struck her ear; she

continued ascending, and discovered large wax torches in full blaze planted here and there in the fissures of the rock; this preparation filled her with fear, whilst the subtle and potent odour which the torches exhaled caused her to sink almost lifeless at the entrance of the grot.

Casting her eyes within in this kind of trance, she beheld a large cistern of gold filled with a water, whose vapour distilled on her face a dew of the essence of roses; a soft symphony resounded through the grot; on the sides of the cistern she noticed appendages of royalty, diadems and feathers of the heron, all sparkling with carbuncles. Whilst her attention was fixed on this display of magnificence, the music ceased, and a voice instantly demanded:

"For what monarch were these torches kindled, this bath prepared, and these habiliments, which belong, not only to the sovereigns of the earth, but even to the Talismanic Powers?"

To which a second voice answered: "They are for the charming daughter of the Emir Fakreddin."

"What!" replied the first, "for that trifler, who consumes her time with a giddy child, immersed in softness, and who at best can make but an enervated husband?"

"And can she," rejoined the other voice, "be amused with such empty trifles, whilst the Caliph, the sovereign of the world, he who is destined to enjoy the treasures of the pre adamite Sultans, a prince six feet high, and whose eyes pervade the inmost soul of a female, is inflamed with the love of her? No! she will be wise enough to answer that passion alone that can aggrandize her glory; no doubt she will, and despise the puppet of her fancy. Then all the riches this place contains, as well as the carbuncle of Giamschid, shall be hers."

"You judge right," returned the first voice, "and I haste to Istakhar to prepare the palace of subterranean fire for the reception of the bridal pair."

The voices ceased, the torches were extinguished, the most entire darkness succeeded, and Nouronihar, recovering with a start, found herself reclined on a sofa in the harem of her father. She clapped her hands, and immediately came together Gulchenrouz and her women, who, in despair at having lost her, had despatched eunuchs to seek her in every direction; Shaban appeared with the rest, and began to reprimand her with an air of consequence:

"Little impertinent," said he, "whence got you false keys? or are you beloved of some Genius that hath given you a pick-lock? I will try the extent of your power; come, to your chamber! through the two skylights; and expect not the company of Gulchenrouz; be expeditious! I will shut you up in the double tower."

At these menaces Nouronihar indignantly raised her head, opened on Shaban her black eyes, which, since the important dialogue of the enchanted grot, were considerably enlarged, and said: "Go, speak thus to slaves, but learn to reverence her who is born to give laws, and subject all to her power."

She was proceeding in the same style, but was interrupted by a sudden exclamation of "The Caliph! The Caliph!" The curtains at once were thrown open, and the slaves prostrate in double rows, whilst poor little Gulchenrouz hid himself beneath the elevation of a sofa. At first appeared a file of black eunuchs, trailing after them long trains of muslin embroidered with gold, and holding in their hands censers, which dispensed as they passed the grateful perfume of the wood of aloes; next marched Bababalouk with a solemn strut, and tossing his head as not overpleased at the visit; Vathek came close after, superbly robed; his gait was unembarrassed and noble, and his presence would have engaged admiration, though he had not been the Sovereign of the world; he approached Nouronihar with a throbbing heart, and seemed enraptured at the full effulgence of her radiant eyes, of which he had before caught but a few glimpses; but she instantly depressed them, and her confusion augmented her beauty.

Bababalouk, who was a thorough adept in coincidences of this nature, and knew that the worst game should be played with the best face, immediately made a signal for all to retire; and no sooner did he perceive beneath the sofa the little one's feet, than he drew him forth without ceremony, set him upon his shoulders, and lavished on him as he went off a thousand odious caresses; Gulchenrouz cried out, and resisted till his cheeks became the colour of the blossom of the pomegranate, and the tears that started into his eyes shot forth a gleam of indignation; he cast a significant glance at Nouronihar, which the Caliph noticing asked: "Is that then your Gulchenrouz?"

"Sovereign of the world!" answered she, "spare my cousin, whose innocence and gentleness deserve not your anger!"

"Take comfort," said Vathek, with a smile, "he is in good hands; Bababalouk is fond of children, and never goes without sweetmeats and comfits."

The daughter of Fakreddin was abashed, and suffered Gulchenrouz to be borne away without adding a word. The tumult of her bosom betrayed her confusion; and Vathek, becoming still more impassioned, gave a loose to his frenzy, which had only not subdued the last faint strugglings of reluctance, when the Emir suddenly bursting in, threw his face upon the ground at the feet of the Caliph, and said:

"Commander of the faithful! abase not yourself to the meanness of your slave."

"No, Emir," replied Vathek, "I raise her to an equality with myself; I declare her my wife, and the glory of your race shall extend from one generation to another."

"Alas! my Lord," said Fakreddin, as he plucked off the honours of his beard, "cut short the days of your faithful servant, rather than force him to depart from his word. Nouronihar, as her hands evince, is solemnly promised to Gulchenrouz, the son of my brother Ali Hassan; they are united also in heart, their faith is mutually plighted, and affiances so sacred cannot be broken."

"What then!" replied the Caliph bluntly, "would you surrender this divine beauty to a husband more womanish than herself? and can you imagine that I will suffer her charms to decay in hands so inefficient and nerveless? No! she is destined to live out her life within my embraces; such is my will; retire, and disturb not the night I devote to the homage of her charms."

The irritated Emir drew forth his sabre, presented it to Vathek, and, stretching out his neck, said in a firm tone of voice: "Strike your unhappy host, my Lord! he has lived long enough, since he hath seen the Prophet's Vicegerent violate the rites of hospitality."

At his uttering these words Nouronihar, unable to support any longer the conflict of her passions, sunk down in a swoon. Vathek, both terrified for her life and furious at an opposition to his will, bade Fakreddin assist his daughter, and withdrew, darting his terrible look at the unfortunate Emir, who suddenly fell backward bathed in a sweat cold as the damp of death.

Gulchenrouz, who had escaped from the hands of Bababalouk, and was that instant returned, called out for help as loudly as he could, not having strength to afford it himself. Pale and panting, the poor child attempted to revive Nouronihar by caresses; and it happened that the thrilling warmth of his lips restored her to life. Fakreddin beginning also to recover from the look of the Caliph, with difficulty tottered to a seat, and after warily casting round his eye to see if this dangerous Prince were gone, sent for Shaban and Sutlememe, and said to them apart:

"My friends! violent evils require as violent remedies; the Caliph has brought desolation and horror into my family, and how shall we resist his power? another of his looks will send me to my grave. Fetch then that narcotic powder, which the Dervish brought me from Aracan; a dose of it, the effect of which will continue three days, must be administered to each of these children; the Caliph will believe them to be dead, for they will have all the appearance of death; we shall go as if to inter them in the cave of Meimoune, at the entrance of the great desert of sand, and near the cabin of my dwarfs. When all the spectators shall be withdrawn, you, Shaban, and four select eunuchs, shall convey them to the lake, where provision shall be ready to support them a month; for one day allotted to the surprise this event will occasion, five to the tears, a fortnight to reflection, and the rest to prepare for renewing his progress, will, according to my calculation, fill up the whole time that Vathek will tarry, and I shall then be freed from his intrusion."

"Your plan," said Sutlememe, "is a good one, if it can but be effected. I have remarked, that Nouronihar is well able to support the glances of the Caliph, and that he is far from being sparing of them to her; be assured therefore, notwithstanding her fondness for Gulchenrouz, she will never remain quiet while she knows him to be here, unless we can persuade her that both herself and Gulchenrouz are really dead, and that they were conveyed to those rocks for a limited season to expiate the little faults of which their love was the cause; we will add that we killed ourselves in despair, and that your dwarfs, whom they never yet saw, will preach to them delectable sermons. I will engage that everything shall succeed to the bent of your wishes."

"Be it so!" said Fakreddin; "I approve your proposal; let us lose not a moment to give it effect."

They forthwith hastened to seek for the powder, which, being mixed in a sherbet, was immediately drunk by Gulchenrouz and Nouronihar. Within the space of an hour both were seized with violent palpitations, and a general numbness gradually ensued; they arose from the floor, where they had remained ever since the Caliph's departure, and, ascending to the sofa, reclined themselves at full length upon it, clasped in each other's embraces.

"Cherish me, my dear Nouronihar!" said Gulchenrouz; "put thy hand upon my heart, for it feels as if it were frozen. Alas! thou art as cold as myself! hath the Caliph murdered us both with his terrible look?"

"I am dying!" cried she in a faltering voice; "press me closer, I am ready to expire!"

"Let us die then together," answered the little Gulchenrouz, whilst his breast laboured with a convulsive sigh; "let me at least breathe forth my soul on thy lips!" They spoke no more, and became as dead.

Immediately the most piercing cries were heard through the harem, whilst Shaban and Sutlememe personated with great adroitness the parts of persons in despair. The Emir, who was sufficiently mortified to be forced into such untoward expedients, and had now for the first time made a trial of his powder, was under no necessity of counterfeiting grief. The slaves, who had flocked together from all quarters, stood motionless at the spectacle before them; all lights were extinguished save two lamps, which shed a wan glimmering over the faces of these lovely flowers, that seemed to be faded in the spring-time of life; funeral vestments were prepared, their bodies were washed with rose-water, their beautiful tresses were braided and incensed, and they were wrapped in simars whiter than alabaster. At the moment that their attendants were placing two wreaths of their favourite jasmines on their brows, the Caliph, who had just heard the tragical catastrophe, arrived; he looked not less pale and haggard than the Ghouls, that wander at night among graves; forgetful of himself and every one else, he broke through the midst of the slaves, fell prostrate at the foot of the sofa, beat his bosom, called himself "atrocious murderer!" and invoked upon his head a thousand

imprecations ; with a trembling hand he raised the veil that covered the countenance of Nouronihar, and, uttering a loud shriek, fell lifeless on the floor. The chief of the eunuchs dragged him off with horrible grimaces, and repeated as he went : " Ay, I foresaw she would play you some ungracious turn ! "

No sooner was the Caliph gone than the Emir commanded biers to be brought, and forbade that any one should enter the harem. Every window was fastened, all instruments of music were broken, and the Imans began to recite their prayers ; towards the close of this melancholy day Vathek sobbed in silence, for they had been forced to compose with anodynes his convulsions of rage and desperation.

At the dawn of the succeeding morning the wide folding doors of the palace were set open, and the funeral procession moved forward for the mountain. The wailful cries of " La Ilah illa Alla ! " reached to the Caliph, who was eager to cicatrise himself and attend the ceremonial ; nor could he have been dissuaded, had not his excessive weakness disabled him from walking ; at the few first steps he fell on the ground, and his people were obliged to lay him on a bed, where he remained many days in such a state of insensibility, as excited compassion in the Emir himself.

When the procession was arrived at the grot of Meimoune, Shaban and Sutlememe dismissed the whole of the train, excepting the four confidential eunuchs who were appointed to remain. After resting some moments near the biers, which had been left in the open air, they caused them to be carried to the brink of a small lake, whose banks were overgrown with a hoary moss ; this was the great resort of herons and storks, which preyed continually on little blue fishes. The dwarfs, instructed by the Emir, soon repaired thither, and, with the help of the eunuchs, began to construct cabins of rushes and reeds, a work in which they had admirable skill ; a magazine also was contrived for provisions, with a small oratory for themselves, and a pyramid of wood neatly piled, to furnish the necessary fuel, for the air was bleak in the hollows of the mountains.

At evening two fires were kindled on the brink of the lake, and the two lovely bodies, taken from their biers, were carefully deposited upon a bed of dried leaves within the same cabin.

The dwarfs began to recite the Koran with their clear shrill voices, and Shaban and Sutlememe stood at some distance, anxiously waiting the effects of the powder. At length Nouronihar and Gulchenrouz faintly stretched out their arms, and gradually opening their eyes, began to survey with looks of increasing amazement every object around them; they even attempted to rise, but, for want of strength, fell back again; Sutlememe on this administered a cordial, which the Emir had taken care to provide.

Gulchenrouz, thoroughly aroused, sneezed out aloud, and raising himself with an effort that expressed his surprise, left the cabin, and inhaled the fresh air with the greatest avidity.

"Yes," said he, "I breathe again! again do I exist! I hear sounds! I behold a firmament spangled over with stars!"

Nouronihar, catching these beloved accents, extricated herself from the leaves, and ran to clasp Gulchenrouz to her bosom. The first objects she remarked were their long simars, their garlands of flowers, and their naked feet; she hid her face in her hands to reflect; the vision of the enchanted bath, the despair of her father, and, more vividly than both, the majestic figure of Vathek, recurred to her memory; she recollected also that herself and Gulchenrouz had been sick and dying; but all these images bewildered her mind. Not knowing where she was, she turned her eyes on all sides, as if to recognise the surrounding scene; this singular lake, those flames reflected from its glassy surface, the pale hues of its banks, the romantic cabins, the bulrushes that sadly waved their drooping heads, the storks whose melancholy cries blended with the shrill voices of the dwarfs, everything conspired to persuade them that the Angel of Death had opened the portal of some other world.

Gulchenrouz on his part, lost in wonder, clung to the neck of his cousin; he believed himself in the region of phantoms, and was terrified at the silence she preserved; at length addressing her:

"Speak," said he, "where are we? do you not see those spectres that are stirring the burning coals? are they Monker and Nakir, come to throw us into them? does the fatal bridge cross this lake, whose solemn stillness perhaps conceals from us an abyss, in which for whole ages we shall be doomed incessantly to sink?"

"No, my children!" said Sutlememe, going towards them, "take comfort! the exterminating Angel, who conducted our souls hither after yours, hath assured us that the chastisement of your indolent and voluptuous life shall be restricted to a certain series of years, which you must pass in this dreary abode, where the sun is scarcely visible, and where the soil yields neither fruits nor flowers. These," continued she, pointing to the dwarfs, "will provide for our wants, for souls so mundane as ours retain too strong a tincture of their earthly extraction; instead of meats your food will be nothing but rice, and your bread shall be moistened in the fogs that brood over the surface of the lake."

At this desolating prospect the poor children burst into tears, and prostrated themselves before the dwarfs, who perfectly supported their characters, and delivered an excellent discourse of a customary length upon the sacred camel, which after a thousand years was to convey them to the paradise of the faithful.

The sermon being ended, and ablutions performed, they praised Alla and the prophet, supped very indifferently, and retired to their withered leaves. Nouronihar and her little cousin consoled themselves on finding that, though dead, they yet lay in one cabin. Having slept well before, the remainder of the night was spent in conversation on what had befallen them, and both, from a dread of apparitions, betook themselves for protection to one another's arms.

In the morning, which was lowering and rainy, the dwarfs mounted high poles like minarets, and called them to prayers; the whole congregation, which consisted of Sutlememe, Shaban, the four eunuchs, and some storks, were already assembled. The two children came forth from their cabin with a slow and dejected pace; as their minds were in a tender and melancholy mood, their devotions were performed with fervour. No sooner were they finished, than Gulchenrouz demanded of Sutlememe and the rest, "how they happened to die so opportunely for his cousin and himself?"

"We killed ourselves," returned Sutlememe, "in despair at your death."

On this, said Nouronihar, who, notwithstanding what was past, had not yet forgotten her vision: "And the Caliph! is he also dead of his grief? and will he likewise come hither?"

The dwarfs, who were prepared with an answer, most demurely replied: "Vathek is damned beyond all redemption!"

"I readily believe so," said Gulchenrouz, "and am glad from my heart to hear it; for I am convinced it was his horrible look that sent us hither to listen to sermons and mess upon rice."

One week passed away on the side of the lake unmarked by any variety; Nouronihar ruminating on the grandeur of which death had deprived her, and Gulchenrouz applying to prayers and to panniers, along with the dwarfs, who infinitely pleased him.

Whilst this scene of innocence was exhibiting in the mountains, the Caliph presented himself to the Emir in a new light; the instant he recovered the use of his senses, with a voice that made Bababalouk quake, he thundered out: "Perfidious Giaour! I renounce thee for ever! it is thou who hast slain my beloved Nouronihar! and I supplicate the pardon of Mahomet, who would have preserved her to me had I been more wise; let water be brought to perform my ablutions, and let the pious Fakreddin be called to offer up his prayers with mine, and reconcile me to him; afterwards we will go together and visit the sepulchre of the unfortunate Nouronihar; I am resolved to become a hermit, and consume the residue of my days on this mountain, in hope of expiating my crimes."

Nouronihar was not altogether so content, for though she felt a fondness for Gulchenrouz, who, to augment the attachment, had been left at full liberty with her, yet she still regarded him as but a bauble, that bore no competition with the carbuncle of Giamschid. At times she indulged doubts on the mode of her being, and scarcely could believe that the dead had all the wants and the whims of the living. To gain satisfaction, however, on so perplexing a topic, she arose one morning whilst all were asleep, with a breathless caution, from the side of Gulchenrouz, and, after having given him a soft kiss, began to follow the windings of the lake till it terminated with a rock, whose top was accessible though lofty; this she clambered up with considerable toil, and, having reached the summit, set forward in a run, like a doe that unwittingly follows her hunter; though she skipped along with the alertness of an antelope, yet at intervals she was forced to desist

and rest beneath the tamarisks to recover her breath. Whilst she, thus reclined, was occupied with her little reflections on the apprehension that she had some knowledge of the place, Vathek, who finding himself that morning but ill at ease had gone forth before the dawn, presented himself on a sudden to her view; motionless with surprise, he durst not approach the figure before him, which lay shrouded up in a simar, extended on the ground, trembling and pale, but yet lovely to behold. At length Nouronihar, with a mixture of pleasure and affliction, raising her fine eyes to him, said: "My Lord! are you come hither to eat rice and hear sermons with me?"

"Beloved phantom!" cried Vathek, "dost thou speak? hast thou the same graceful form? the same radiant features? art thou palpable likewise?" and, eagerly embracing her, added: "Here are limbs and a bosom animated with a gentle warmth! what can such a prodigy mean?"

Nouronihar with diffidence answered: "You know, my Lord, that I died on the night you honoured me with your visit; my cousin maintains it was from one of your glances, but I cannot believe him; for to me they seem not so dreadful. Gulchenrouz died with me, and we were both brought into a region of desolation, where we are fed with a wretched diet. If you be dead also, and are come hither to join us, I pity your lot; for you will be stunned with the noise of the dwarfs and the storks; besides, it is mortifying in the extreme that you, as well as myself, should have lost the treasures of the subterranean palace."

At the mention of the subterranean palace the Caliph suspended his caresses, which indeed had proceeded pretty far, to seek from Nouronihar an explanation of her meaning. She then recapitulated her vision, what immediately followed, and the history of her pretended death, adding also a description of the place of expiation from whence she had fled, and all in a manner that would have extorted his laughter, had not the thoughts of Vathek been too deeply engaged. No sooner, however, had she ended, than he again clasped her to his bosom and said:

"Light of my eyes! the mystery is unravelled; we both are alive! your father is a cheat, who, for the sake of dividing, hath deluded us both; and the Giaour, whose design, as far as I can discover, is that we shall proceed together, seems

scarce a whit better; it shall be some time at least before he finds us in his palace of fire. Your lovely little person in my estimation is far more precious than all the treasures of the pre-adamite Sultans, and I wish to possess it at pleasure, and in open day, for many a moon, before I go to burrow underground like a mole. Forget this little trifler, Gulchenrouz, and——"

"Ah! my Lord!" interposed Nouronihar, "let me entreat that you do him no evil."

"No, no!" replied Vathek, "I have already bid you forbear to alarm yourself for him; he has been brought up too much on milk and sugar to stimulate my jealousy; we will leave him with the dwarfs, who by-the-bye are my old acquaintances; their company will suit him far better than yours. As to other matters, I will return no more to your father's; I want not to have my ears dinned by him and his dotards with the violation of the rites of hospitality; as if it were less an honour for you to espouse the Sovereign of the world than a girl dressed up like a boy!"

Nouronihar could find nothing to oppose in a discourse so eloquent; she only wished the amorous Monarch had discovered more ardour for the carbuncle of Giamschid; but flattered herself it would gradually increase, and therefore yielded to his will with the most bewitching submission.

When the Caliph judged it proper he called for Bababalouk, who was asleep in the cave of Meimoune, and dreaming that the phantom of Nouronihar, having mounted him once more on her swing, had just given him such a jerk, that he one moment soared above the mountains, and the next sunk into the abyss; starting from his sleep at the voice of his master, he ran gasping for breath, and had nearly fallen backward at the sight, as he believed, of the spectre by whom he had so lately been haunted in his dream.

"Ah, my Lord!" cried he, recoiling ten steps, and covering his eyes with both hands; "do you then perform the office of a ghoul! 'tis true you have dug up the dead, yet hope not to make her your prey; for after all she hath caused me to suffer she is even wicked enough to prey upon you."

"Cease thy folly," said Vathek, "and thou shalt soon be convinced that it is Nouronihar herself, alive and well, whom I clasp to my breast; go only and pitch my tents in the neigh-

bouring valley; there will I fix my abode with this beautiful tulip, whose colours I soon shall restore; there exert thy best endeavours to procure whatever can augment the enjoyments of life, till I shall disclose to thee more of my will."

The news of so unlucky an event soon reached the ears of the Emir, who abandoned himself to grief and despair, and began, as did all his old greybeards, to begrime his visage with ashes. A total supineness ensued, travellers were no longer entertained, no more plaisters were spread, and, instead of the charitable activity that had distinguished this asylum, the whole of its inhabitants exhibited only faces of a half cubit long, and uttered groans that accorded with their forlorn situation.

Though Fakreddin bewailed his daughter as lost to him for ever, yet Gulchenrouz was not forgotten. He despatched immediate instruction to Sutlememe, Shaban, and the dwarfs, enjoining them not to undeceive the child in respect to his state, but, under some pretence, to convey him far from the lofty rock at the extremity of the lake, to a place which he should appoint, as safer from danger; for he suspected that Vathek intended him evil.

Gulchenrouz in the meanwhile was filled with amazement at not finding his cousin; nor were the dwarfs at all less surprised; but Sutlememe, who had more penetration, immediately guessed what had happened. Gulchenrouz was amused with the delusive hope of once more embracing Nouronihar in the interior recesses of the mountains, where the ground, strewed over with orange blossoms and jasmines, offered beds much more inviting than the withered leaves in their cabin, where they might accompany with their voices the sounds of their lutes, and chase butterflies in concert. Sutlememe was far gone in this sort of description, when one of the four eunuchs beckoned her aside, to apprise her of the arrival of a messenger from their fraternity, who had explained the secret of the flight of Nouronihar, and brought the commands of the Emir. A council with Shaban and the dwarfs was immediately held; their baggage being stowed in consequence of it, they embarked in a shallop, and quietly sailed with the little one, who acquiesced in all their proposals; their voyage proceeded in the same manner till they came to the place where the lake sinks beneath the hollow of the rock; but as soon as the bark had entered it, and Gulchenrouz found himself surrounded

with darkness, he was seized with a dreadful consternation, and incessantly uttered the most piercing outcries; for he now was persuaded he should actually be damned for having taken too many little freedoms in his lifetime with his cousin.

But let us return to the Caliph, and her who ruled over his heart. Bababalouk had pitched the tents, and closed up the extremities of the valley with magnificent screens of India cloth, which were guarded by Ethiopian slaves with their drawn sabres; to preserve the verdure of this beautiful enclosure in its natural freshness, the white eunuchs went continually round it with their red water vessels. The waving of fans was heard near the imperial pavilion, where, by the voluptuous light that glowed through the muslins, the Caliph enjoyed at full view all the attractions of Nouronihar. Inebriated with delight, he was all ear to her charming voice, which accompanied the lute; while she was not less captivated with his descriptions of Samarah and the tower full of wonders, but especially with his relation of the adventure of the ball, and the chasm of the Giaour with its ebony portal.

In this manner they conversed for a day and a night; they bathed together in a basin of black marble, which admirably relieved the fairness of Nouronihar. Bababalouk, whose good graces this beauty had regained, spared no attention that their repasts might be served up with the minutest exactness; some exquisite rarity was ever placed before them; and he sent even to Shiraz for that fragrant and delicious wine, which had been hoarded up in bottles prior to the birth of Mahomet; he had excavated little ovens in the rock to bake the nice manchets which were prepared by the hands of Nouronihar, from whence they had derived a flavour so grateful to Vathek, that he regarded the ragouts of his other wives as entirely mawkish; whilst they would have died at the Emir's of chagrin, at finding themselves so neglected, if Fakreddin, notwithstanding his resentment, had not taken pity upon them.

The Sultana Dilara, who till then had been the favourite, took this dereliction of the Caliph to heart with a vehemence natural to her character; for during her continuance in favour, she had imbibed from Vathek many of his extravagant fancies, and was fired with impatience to behold the superb tombs of Istakar, and the palace of forty columns; besides, having been brought up amongst the Magi, she had fondly cherished the

idea of the Caliph's devoting himself to the worship of fire; thus his voluptuous and desultory life with her rival was to her a double source of affliction. The transient piety of Vathek had occasioned her some serious alarms, but the present was an evil of far greater magnitude; she resolved therefore, without hesitation, to write to Carathis, and acquaint her that all things went ill; that they had eaten, slept, and revelled at an old Emir's, whose sanctity was very formidable, and that, after all, the prospect of possessing the treasures of the pre-adamite Sultans was no less remote than before. This letter was entrusted to the care of two woodmen, who were at work on one of the great forests of the mountains, and, being acquainted with the shortest cuts, arrived in ten days at Samarah.

The Princess Carathis was engaged at chess with Morakanabad, when the arrival of these wood-fellers was announced. She, after some weeks of Vathek's absence, had forsaken the upper regions of her tower, because everything appeared in confusion among the stars, whom she consulted relative to the fate of her son. In vain did she renew her fumigations, and extend herself on the roof to obtain mystic visions; nothing more could she see in her dreams than pieces of brocade, nosegays of flowers, and other unmeaning gewgaws. These disappointments had thrown her into a state of dejection, which no drug in her power was sufficient to remove; her only resource was in Morakanabad, who was a good man, and endowed with a decent share of confidence, yet whilst in her company he never thought himself on roses.

No person knew aught of Vathek, and a thousand ridiculous stories were propagated at his expense. The eagerness of Carathis may be easily guessed at receiving the letter, as well as her rage at reading the dissolute conduct of her son. "Is it so?" said she; "either I will perish, or Vathek shall enter the palace of fire. Let me expire in flames, provided he may reign on the throne of Soliman!" Having said this, and whirled herself round in a magical manner, which struck Morakanabad with such terror as caused him to recoil, she ordered her great camel Alboufaki to be brought, and the hideous Nerkes with the unrelenting Cafour to attend. "I require no other retinue," said she to Morakanabad; "I am going on affairs of emergency, a truce therefore to parade!

Take you care of the people, fleece them well in my absence; for we shall expend large sums, and one knows not what may betide."

The night was uncommonly dark, and a pestilential blast ravaged the plain of Catoul that would have deterred any other traveller, however urgent the call; but Carathis enjoyed most whatever filled others with dread. Nerkes concurred in opinion with her, and Cafour had a particular predilection for a pestilence. In the morning this accomplished caravan, with the wood-fellers who directed their route, halted on the edge of an extensive marsh, from whence so noxious a vapour arose as would have destroyed any animal but Alboufaki, who naturally inhaled these malignant fogs. The peasants entreated their convoy not to sleep in this place.

"To sleep," cried Carathis; "what an excellent thought! I never sleep but for visions; and, as to my attendants, their occupations are too many to close the only eye they each have."

The poor peasants, who were not overpleased with their party, remained open-mouthed with surprise.

Carathis alighted, as well as her negresses, and severally stripping off their outer garments, they all ran in their drawers, to cull from those spots where the sun shone fiercest the venomous plants that grew on the marsh; this provision was made for the family of the Emir, and whoever might retard the expedition to Istakar. The woodmen were overcome with fear when they beheld these three horrible phantoms run, and, not much relishing the company of Alboufaki, stood aghast at the command of Carathis to set forward, notwithstanding it was noon, and the heat fierce enough to calcine even rocks. In spite, however, of every remonstrance, they were forced implicitly to submit.

Alboufaki, who delighted in solitude, constantly snorted whenever he perceived himself near a habitation; and Carathis, who was apt to spoil him with indulgence, as constantly turned him aside, so that the peasants were precluded from procuring subsistence; for the milch goats and ewes, which Providence had sent towards the district they traversed, to refresh travellers with their milk, all fled at the sight of the hideous animal and his strange riders. As to Carathis, she needed no common aliment, for her invention had previously furnished her with

an opiate to stay her stomach, some of which she imparted to her mutes.

At the fall of night Alboufaki, making a sudden stop, stamped with his foot, which to Carathis, who understood his paces, was a certain indication that she was near the confines of some cemetery. The moon shed a bright light on the spot, which served to discover a long wall, with a large door in it standing ajar, and so high that Alboufaki might easily enter. The miserable guides, who perceived their end approaching, humbly implored Carathis, as she had now so good an opportunity, to inter them, and immediately gave up the ghost. Nerkes and Cafour, whose wit was of a style peculiar to themselves, were by no means parsimonious of it on the folly of these poor people, nor could anything have been found more suited to their tastes than the site of the burying-ground, and the sepulchres which its precincts contained; there were at least two thousand of them on the declivity of a hill; some in the form of pyramids, others like columns, and in short the variety of their shapes was endless. Carathis was too much immersed in her sublime contemplations to stop at the view, charming as it appeared in her eyes; pondering the advantages that might accrue from her present situation, she could not forbear to exclaim:

"So beautiful a cemetery must be haunted by ghouls! and they want not for intelligence; having heedlessly suffered my guides to expire, I will apply for directions to them, and as an inducement will invite them to regale on these fresh corpses."

After this short soliloquy she beckoned to Nerkes and Cafour, and made signs with her fingers, as much as to say: "Go, knock against the sides of the tombs, and strike up your delightful warblings, that are so like to those of the guests whose company I wish to obtain."

The negresses, full of joy at the behests of their mistress, and promising themselves much pleasure from the society of the ghouls, went with an air of conquest, and began their knockings at the tombs; as their strokes were repeated a hollow noise was heard in the earth, the surface hove up into heaps, and the ghouls on all sides protruded their noses, to inhale the effluvia, which the carcasses of the woodmen began to emit.

They assembled before a sarcophagus of white marble,

where Carathis was seated between the bodies of her miserable guides; the Princess received her visitants with distinguished politeness, and, when supper was ended, proceeded with them to business. Having soon learnt from them everything she wished to discover, it was her intention to set forward forthwith on her journey, but her negresses, who were forming tender connections with the ghouls, importuned her, with all their fingers, to wait at least till the dawn. Carathis, however, being chastity in the abstract, and an implacable enemy to love and repose, at once rejected their prayer, mounted Alboufaki, and commanded them to take their seats in a moment; four days and four nights she continued her route, without turning to the right hand or left; on the fifth she traversed the mountains and half-burnt forests, and arrived on the sixth before the beautiful screens which concealed from all eyes the voluptuous wanderings of her son.

It was daybreak, and the guards were snoring on their posts in careless security, when the rough trot of Alboufaki awoke them in consternation. Imagining that a group of spectres ascended from the abyss was approaching, they all without ceremony took to their heels. Vathek was at that instant with Nouronihar in the bath, hearing tales, and laughing at Bababalouk who related them; but no sooner did the outcry of his guards reach him, than he flounced from the water like a carp, and as soon threw himself back at the sight of Carathis, who, advancing with her negresses upon Alboufaki, broke through the muslin awnings and veils of the pavilion; at this sudden apparition Nouronihar (for she was not at all times free from remorse) fancied that the moment of celestial vengeance was come, and clung about the Caliph in amorous despondence.

Carathis, still seated on her camel, foamed with indignation at the spectacle which obtruded itself on her chaste view; she thundered forth without check or mercy: "Thou double-headed and four-legged monster! what means all this winding and writhing? art thou not ashamed to be seen grasping this limber sapling, in preference to the sceptre of the pre-adamite Sultans? is it then for this paltry doxy that thou hast violated the conditions in the parchment of our Giaour? is it on her thou hast lavished thy precious moments? is this the fruit of he knowledge I have taught thee? is this the end of thy journey? tear thyself from the arms of this little simpleton,

drown her in the water before me, and instantly follow my guidance."

In the first ebullition of his fury Vathek resolved to make a skeleton of Alboufaki, and to stuff the skins of Carathis and her blacks; but the ideas of the Giaour, the palace of Istakar, the sabres and the talismans, flashing before his imagination with the simultaneousness of lightning, he became more moderate, and said to his mother, in a civil but decisive tone: "Dread lady! you shall be obeyed, but I will not drown Nouronihar; she is sweeter to me than a Myrabolan comfit, and is enamoured of carbuncles, especially that of Giamschid, which hath also been promised to be conferred upon her; she therefore shall go along with us, for I intend to repose with her beneath the canopies of Soliman; I can sleep no more without her."

"Be it so!" replied Carathis, alighting, and at the same time committing Alboufaki to the charge of her women.

Nouronihar, who had not yet quitted her hold, began to take courage, and said with an accent of fondness to the Caliph: "Dear Sovereign of my soul! I will follow thee, if it be thy will, beyond the Kaf in the land of the Afrits; I will not hesitate to climb for thee the nest of the Simurgh, who, this lady excepted, is the most awful of created existences."

"We have here then," subjoined Carathis, "a girl both of courage and science!"

Nouronihar had certainly both; but, notwithstanding all her firmness, she could not help casting back a look of regret upon the graces of her little Gulchenrouz, and the days of tenderness she had participated with him; she even dropped a few tears, which Carathis observed, and inadvertently breathed out with a sigh: "Alas! my gentle cousin! what will become of him?"

Vathek at this apostrophe knitted up his brows, and Carathis inquired what it could mean?

"She is preposterously sighing after a stripling with languishing eyes and soft hair, who loves her," said the Caliph.

"Where is he?" asked Carathis. "I must be acquainted with this pretty child; for," added she, lowering her voice, "I design before I depart to regain the favour of the Giaour; there is nothing so delicious in his estimation as the heart of a delicate boy, palpitating with the first tumults of love."

Vathek, as he came from the bath, commanded Bababalouk to collect the women and other movables of his harem, embody his troops, and hold himself in readiness to march in three days; whilst Carathis retired alone to a tent, where the Giaour solaced her with encouraging visions; but at length waking, she found at her feet Nerkes and Cafour, who informed her by their signs, that having led Alboufaki to the borders of a lake, to browse on some moss that looked tolerably venomous, they had discovered certain blue fishes of the same kind with those in the reservoir on the top of the tower.

"Ah! ha!" said she, "I will go thither to them; these fish are past doubt of a species that, by a small operation, I can render oracular; they may tell me where this little Gulchenrouz is, whom I am bent upon sacrificing." Having thus spoken, she immediately set out with her swarthy retinue.

It being but seldom that time is lost in the accomplishment of a wicked enterprise, Carathis and her negresses soon arrived at the lake, where, after burning the magical drugs with which they were always provided, they, stripping themselves naked, waded to their chins, Nerkes and Cafour waving torches around them, and Carathis pronouncing her barbarous incantations. The fishes with one accord thrust forth their heads from the water, which was violently rippled by the flutter of their fins, and, at length finding themselves constrained by the potency of the charm, they opened their piteous mouths, and said: "From gills to tail we are yours; what seek ye to know?"

"Fishes," answered she, "I conjure you, by your glittering scales, tell me where now is Gulchenrouz?"

"Beyond the rock," replied the shoal in full chorus; "will this content you? for we do not delight in expanding our mouths."

"It will," returned the Princess; "I have not to learn that you like not long conversations; I will leave you therefore to repose, though I had other questions to propound." The instant she had spoken the water became smooth, and the fishes at once disappeared.

Carathis, inflated with the venom of her projects, strode hastily over the rock, and found the amiable Gulchenrouz asleep in an arbour, whilst the two dwarfs were watching at his side, and ruminating their accustomed prayers. These diminutive personages possessed the gift of divining whenever

an enemy to good Mussulmans approached; thus they anticipated the arrival of Carathis, who, stopping short, said to herself: "How placidly doth he recline his lovely little head! how pale and languishing are his looks! it is just the very child of my wishes!"

The dwarfs interrupted this delectable soliloquy by leaping instantly upon her, and scratching her face with their utmost zeal. But Nerkes and Cafour, betaking themselves to the succour of their mistress, pinched the dwarfs so severely in return, that they both gave up the ghost, imploring Mahomet to inflict his sorest vengeance upon this wicked woman and all her household.

At the noise which this strange conflict occasioned in the valley Gulchenrouz awoke, and, bewildered with terror, sprung impetuously upon an old fig-tree that rose against the acclivity of the rocks; from thence gained their summits, and ran for two hours without once looking back. At last, exhausted with fatigue, he fell as if dead into the arms of a good old Genius, whose fondness for the company of children had made it his sole occupation to protect them, and who, whilst performing his wonted rounds through the air, happening on the cruel Giaour at the instant of his growling in the horrible chasm, rescued the fifty little victims which the impiety of Vathek had devoted to his maw; these the Genius brought up in nests still higher than the clouds, and himself fixed his abode in a nest more capacious than the rest, from which he had expelled the possessors that had built it.

These inviolable asylums were defended against the Divas and the Afrits by waving streamers, on which were inscribed, in characters of gold that flashed like lightning, the names of Alla and the Prophet. It was there that Gulchenrouz, who as yet remained undeceived with respect to his pretended death, thought himself in the mansions of eternal peace; he admitted without fear the congratulations of his little friends, who were all assembled in the nest of the venerable Genius, and vied with each other in kissing his serene forehead and beautiful eyelids. This he found to be the state congenial to his soul; remote from the inquietudes of earth, the impertinence of harems, the brutality of eunuchs, and the lubricity of women, in this peaceable society his days, months, and years glided on; nor was he less happy than the rest of his companions; for

the Genius, instead of burthening his pupils with perishable riches and the vain sciences of the world, conferred upon them the boon of perpetual childhood.

Carathis, unaccustomed to the loss of her prey, vented a thousand execrations on her negresses for not seizing the child, instead of amusing themselves with pinching to death the dwarfs, from which they could gain no advantage. She returned into the valley murmuring, and finding that her son was not risen from the arms of Nouronihar, discharged her ill-humour upon both. The idea, however, of departing next day for Istakar, and cultivating, through the good offices of the Giaour, an intimacy with Eblis himself, at length consoled her chagrin. But Fate had ordained it otherwise.

In the evening, as Carathis was conversing with Dilara, who, through her contrivance, had become of the party, and whose taste resembled her own, Bababalouk came to acquaint her, "that the sky towards Samarah looked of a fiery red, and seemed to portend some alarming disaster." Immediately, recurring to her astrolabes and instruments of magic, she took the altitude of the planets, and discovered by her calculations, to her great mortification, that a formidable revolt had taken place at Samarah; that Motavakel, availing himself of the disgust which was inveterate against his brother, had incited commotions amongst the populace, made himself master of the palace, and actually invested the great tower, to which Morakanabad had retired, with a handful of the few that still remained faithful to Vathek.

"What!" exclaimed she; "must I lose then my tower! my mutes! my negresses! my mummies! and, worse than all, the laboratory in which I have spent so many a night; without knowing at least if my hare-brained son will complete his adventure? No! I will not be the dupe! Immediately will I speed to support Morakanabad; by my formidable art the clouds shall sleet hailstones in the faces of the assailants, and shafts of red-hot iron on their heads; I will spring mines of serpents and torpedoes from beneath them, and we shall soon see the stand they will make against such an explosion!"

Having thus spoken Carathis hastened to her son, who was tranquilly banqueting with Nouronihar in his superb carnation-coloured tent.

"Glutton that thou art!" cried she, "were it not for me,

thou wouldst soon find thyself the commander only of pies. Thy faithful subjects have abjured the faith they swore to thee; Motavakel, thy brother, now reigns on the hill of Pied Horses, and had I not some slight resources in the tower, would not be easily persuaded to abdicate; but, that time may not be lost, I shall only add four words: Strike tent to-night, set forward, and beware how thou loiterest again by the way; though thou hast forfeited the conditions of the parchment, I am not yet without hope; for it cannot be denied that thou hast violated to admiration the laws of hospitality, by seducing the daughter of the Emir after having partaken of his bread and his salt. Such a conduct cannot but be delightful to the Giaour; and if on thy march thou canst signalize thyself by an additional crime, all will still go well, and thou shalt enter the palace of Soliman in triumph. Adieu! Alboufaki and my negresses are waiting.'

The Caliph had nothing to offer in reply; he wished his mother a prosperous journey, and eat on till he had finished his supper. At midnight the camp broke up, amidst the flourishing of trumpets and other martial instruments; but loud indeed must have been the sound of the tymbals to overpower the blubbering of the Emir and his long-beards, who, by an excessive profusion of tears, had so far exhausted the radical moisture, that their eyes shrivelled up in their sockets, and their hairs dropped off by the roots. Nouronihar, to whom such a symphony was painful, did not grieve to get out of hearing; she accompanied the Caliph in the imperial litter, where they amused themselves with imagining the splendour which was soon to surround them. The other women, overcome with dejection, were dolefully rocked in their cages, whilst Dilara consoled herself with anticipating the joy of celebrating the rites of fire on the stately terraces of Istakar.

In four days they reached the spacious valley of Rocnabad. The season of spring was in all its vigour, and the grotesque branches of the almond trees in full blossom fantastically chequered the clear blue sky; the earth, variegated with hyacinths and jonquils, breathed forth a fragrance which diffused through the soul a divine repose; myriads of bees and scarce fewer of Santons had there taken up their abode; on the banks of the stream hives and oratories were alternately ranged, and their

neatness and whiteness were set off by the deep green of the cypresses that spired up amongst them. These pious personages amused themselves with cultivating little gardens that abounded with flowers and fruits, especially musk-melons of the best flavour that Persia could boast; sometimes dispersed over the meadow, they entertained themselves with feeding peacocks whiter than snow, and turtles more blue than the sapphire; in this manner were they occupied when the harbingers of the imperial procession began to proclaim: "Inhabitants of Rocnabad! prostrate yourselves on the brink of your pure waters, and tender your thanksgivings to Heaven, that vouchsafeth to show you a ray of its glory; for lo! the Commander of the faithful draws near."

The poor Santons, filled with holy energy, having bustled to light up wax torches in their oratories and expand the Koran on their ebony desks, went forth to meet the Caliph with baskets of honeycomb, dates, and melons. But, whilst they were advancing in solemn procession and with measured steps, the horses, camels, and guards wantoned over their tulips and other flowers, and made a terrible havoc amongst them. The Santons could not help casting from one eye a look of pity on the ravages committing around them, whilst the other was fixed upon the Caliph and heaven. Nouronihar, enraptured with the scenery of a place which brought back to her remembrance the pleasing solitudes where her infancy had passed, entreated Vathek to stop; but he, suspecting that each oratory might be deemed by the Giaour a distinct habitation, commanded his pioneers to level them all; the Santons stood motionless with horror at the barbarous mandate, and at last broke out into lamentations; but these were uttered with so ill a grace, that Vathek bade his eunuchs to kick them from his presence. He then descended from the litter with Nouronihar; they sauntered together in the meadow, and amused themselves with culling flowers, and passing a thousand pleasantries on each other. But the bees, who were staunch Mussulmans, thinking it their duty to revenge the insult on their dear masters the Santons, assembled so zealously to do it with effect, that the Caliph and Nouronihar were glad to find their tents prepared to receive them.

Bababalouk, who in capacity of purveyor had acquitted himself with applause as to peacocks and turtles, lost no time in

consigning some dozens to the spit, and as many more to be fricasseed. Whilst they were feasting, laughing, carousing, and blaspheming at pleasure on the banquet so liberally furnished, the Moullahs, the Sheiks, the Cadis, and Imans of Shiraz (who seemed not to have met the Santons) arrived, leading by bridles of riband, inscribed from the Koran, a train of asses, which were loaded with the choicest fruits the country could boast; having presented their offerings to the Caliph, they petitioned him to honour their city and mosques with his presence.

"Fancy not," said Vathek, "that you can detain me; your presents I condescend to accept, but beg you will let me be quiet, for I am not over-fond of resisting temptation; retire then; yet, as it is not decent for personages so reverend to return on foot, and as you have not the appearance of expert riders, my eunuchs shall tie you on your asses, with the precaution that your backs be not turned towards me, for they understand etiquette."

In this deputation were some high-stomached sheiks, who, taking Vathek for a fool, scrupled not to speak their opinion. These Bababalouk girded with double cords, and, having well disciplined their asses with nettles behind, they all started with a preternatural alertness, plunging, kicking, and running foul of each other in the most ludicrous manner imaginable.

Nouronihar and the Caliph mutually contended who should most enjoy so degrading a sight; they burst out in volleys of laughter to see the old men and their asses fall into the stream; the leg of one was fractured, the shoulder of another dislocated, the teeth of a third dashed out, and the rest suffered still worse.

Two days more, undisturbed by fresh embassies, having been devoted to the pleasures of Rocnabad, the expedition proceeded, leaving Shiraz on the right, and verging towards a large plain, from whence were discernible on the edge of the horizon the dark summits of the mountains of Istakar.

At this prospect the Caliph and Nouronihar were unable to repress their transports; they bounded from their litter to the ground, and broke forth into such wild exclamations, as amazed all within hearing. Interrogating each other, they shouted: "Are we not approaching the radiant palace of light? or gardens more delightful than those of Sheddad?" Infatuated

mortals! they thus indulged delusive conjecture, unable to fathom the decrees of the Most High!

The good Genii, who had not totally relinquished the superintendence of Vathek, repairing to Mahomet in the seventh heaven, said: "Merciful Prophet! stretch forth thy propitious arms towards thy Vicegerent, who is ready to fall irretrievably into the snare which his enemies, the Divas, have prepared to destroy him; the Giaour is awaiting his arrival in the abominable palace of fire, where, if he once set his foot, his perdition will be inevitable."

Mahomet answered with an air of indignation: "He hath too well deserved to be resigned to himself, but I permit you to try if one effort more will be effectual to divert him from pursuing his ruin."

One of these beneficent Genii, assuming without delay the exterior of a shepherd, more renowned for his piety than all the Dervishes and Santons of the region, took his station near a flock of white sheep on the slope of a hill, and began to pour forth from his flute such airs of pathetic melody, as subdued the very soul, and, awakening remorse, drove far from it every frivolous fancy. At these energetic sounds the sun did hide himself beneath a gloomy cloud, and the waters of two little lakes, that were naturally clearer than crystal, became of a colour like blood. The whole of this superb assembly was involuntarily drawn towards the declivity of the hill; with downcast eyes they all stood abashed, each upbraiding himself with the evil he had done; the heart of Dilara palpitated, and the chief of the eunuchs with a sigh of contrition implored pardon of the women, whom for his own satisfaction he had so often tormented.

Vathek and Nouronihar turned pale in their litter, and, regarding each other with haggard looks, reproached themselves—the one with a thousand of the blackest crimes, a thousand projects of impious ambition; the other with the desolation of her family, and the perdition of the amiable Gulchenrouz. Nouronihar persuaded herself that she heard in the fatal music the groans of her dying father, and Vathek, the sobs of the fifty children he had sacrificed to the Giaour. Amidst these complicated pangs of anguish they perceived themselves impelled towards the shepherd, whose countenance was so commanding, that Vathek for the first time

felt overawed, whilst Nouronihar concealed her face with her hands.

The music paused, and the Genius, addressing the Caliph, said: "Deluded Prince! to whom Providence hath confided the care of innumerable subjects, is it thus that thou fulfillest thy mission? Thy crimes are already completed, and art thou now hastening towards thy punishment? Thou knowest that beyond these mountains Eblis and his accursed Dives hold their infernal empire; and, seduced by a malignant phantom, thou art proceeding to surrender thyself to them! This moment is the last of grace allowed thee; abandon thy atrocious purpose; return; give back Nouronihar to her father, who still retains a few sparks of life; destroy thy tower with all its abominations; drive Carathis from thy councils; be just to thy subjects; respect the ministers of the Prophet; compensate for thy impieties by an exemplary life; and, instead of squandering thy days in voluptuous indulgence, lament thy crimes on the sepulchres of thy ancestors. Thou beholdest the clouds that obscure the sun; at the instant he recovers his splendour, if thy heart be not changed, the time of mercy assigned thee will be past for ever."

Vathek, depressed with fear, was on the point of prostrating himself at the feet of the shepherd, whom he perceived to be of a nature superior to man; but, his pride prevailing, he audaciously lifted his head, and, glancing at him one of his terrible looks, said: "Whoever thou art, withhold thy useless admonitions; thou wouldst either delude me, or art thyself deceived. If what I have done be so criminal as thou pretendest, there remains not for me a moment of grace; I have traversed a sea of blood to acquire a power which will make thy equals tremble; deem not that I shall retire when in view of the port, or that I will relinquish her who is dearer to me than either my life or thy mercy. Let the sun appear! let him illumine my career! it matters not where it may end." On uttering these words, which made even the Genius shudder, Vathek threw himself into the arms of Nouronihar, and commanded that his horses should be forced back to the road.

There was no difficulty in obeying these orders, for the attraction had ceased; the sun shone forth in all his glory, and the shepherd vanished with a lamentable scream.

The fatal impression of the music of the Genius remained

notwithstanding in the heart of Vathek's attendants; they viewed each other with looks of consternation; at the approach of night almost all of them escaped, and of this numerous assemblage there only remained the chief of the eunuchs, some idolatrous slaves, Dilara and a few other women, who, like herself, were votaries of the religion of the Magi.

The Caliph, fired with the ambition of prescribing laws to the Intelligences of Darkness, was but little embarrassed at this dereliction; the impetuosity of his blood prevented him from sleeping, nor did he encamp any more as before. Nouronihar, whose impatience if possible exceeded his own, importuned him to hasten his march, and lavished on him a thousand caresses to beguile all reflection; she fancied herself already more potent than Balkis, and pictured to her imagination the Genii falling prostrate at the foot of her throne. In this manner they advanced by moonlight, till they came within view of the two towering rocks that form a kind of portal to the valley, at whose extremity rose the vast ruins of Istakar. Aloft on the mountain glimmered the fronts of various royal mausoleums, the horror of which was deepened by the shadows of night. They passed through two villages almost deserted, the only inhabitants remaining being a few feeble old men, who, at the sight of horses and litters, fell upon their knees and cried out:

"O heaven! is it then by these phantoms that we have been for six months tormented? Alas! it was from the terror of these spectres and the noise beneath the mountains, that our people have fled, and left us at the mercy of maleficent spirits!"

The Caliph, to whom these complaints were but unpromising auguries, drove over the bodies of these wretched old men, and at length arrived at the foot of the terrace of black marble; there he descended from his litter, handing down Nouronihar; both with beating hearts stared wildly around them, and expected with an apprehensive shudder the approach of the Giaour; but nothing as yet announced his appearance.

A deathlike stillness reigned over the mountain and through the air; the moon dilated on a vast platform the shades of the lofty columns, which reached from the terrace almost to the clouds; the gloomy watch-towers, whose numbers could not be counted, were veiled by no roof, and their capitals, of an architecture unknown in the records of the earth, served as an

asylum for the birds of darkness, which, alarmed at the approach of such visitants, fled away croaking.

The chief of the eunuchs, trembling with fear, besought Vathek that a fire might be kindled.

"No!" replied he, "there is no time left to think of such trifles; abide where thou art, and expect my commands."

Having thus spoken he presented his hand to Nouronihar, and, ascending the steps of a vast staircase, reached the terrace, which was flagged with squares of marble, and resembled a smooth expanse of water, upon whose surface not a leaf ever dared to vegetate; on the right rose the watch-towers, ranged before the ruins of an immense palace, whose walls were embossed with various figures; in front stood forth the colossal forms of four creatures, composed of the leopard and the griffin; and, though but of stone, they inspired emotions of terror; near these were distinguished by the splendour of the moon, which streamed full on the place, characters like those on the sabres of the Giaour, that possessed the same virtue of changing every moment; these, after vacillating for some time, at last fixed in Arabic letters, and prescribed to the Caliph the following words:

"Vathek! thou hast violated the conditions of my parchment, and deservest to be sent back; but, in favour to thy companion, and as the meed for what thou hast done to obtain it, EBLIS permitteth that the portal of his palace shall be opened, and the subterranean fire will receive thee into the number of its adorers."

He scarcely had read these words before the mountain against which the terrace was reared trembled, and the watch-towers were ready to topple headlong upon them; the rock yawned, and disclosed within it a staircase of polished marble, that seemed to approach the abyss; upon each stair were planted two large torches, like those Nouronihar had seen in her vision, the camphorated vapour ascending from which gathered into a cloud under the hollow of the vault.

This appearance, instead of terrifying, gave new courage to the daughter of Fakreddin. Scarcely deigning to bid adieu to the moon and the firmament, she abandoned without hesitation the pure atmosphere to plunge into these infernal exhalations. The gait of those impious personages was haughty and determined; as they descended by the effulgence of the torches

they gazed on each other with mutual admiration, and both appeared so resplendent, that they already esteemed themselves spiritual Intelligences; the only circumstance that perplexed them was their not arriving at the bottom of the stairs; on hastening their descent with an ardent impetuosity, they felt their steps accelerated to such a degree, that they seemed not walking, but falling from a precipice. Their progress, however, was at length impeded by a vast portal of ebony, which the Caliph without difficulty recognised; here the Giaour awaited them with the key in his hand.

"Ye are welcome," said he to them with a ghastly smile, "in spite of Mahomet and all his dependents. I will now admit you into that palace where you have so highly merited a place."

Whilst he was uttering these words, he touched the enamelled lock with his key, and the doors at once expanded, with a noise still louder than the thunder of mountains, and as suddenly recoiled the moment they had entered.

The Caliph and Nouronihar beheld each other with amazement, at finding themselves in a place which, though roofed with a vaulted ceiling, was so spacious and lofty that at first they took it for an immeasurable plain. But their eyes at length growing familiar to the grandeur of the objects at hand, they extended their view to those at a distance, and discovered rows of columns and arcades, which gradually diminished till they terminated in a point, radiant as the sun when he darts his last beams athwart the ocean; the pavement, strewed over with gold dust and saffron, exhaled so subtle an odour as almost overpowered them; they, however, went on, and observed an infinity of censers, in which ambergris and the wood of aloes were continually burning; between the several columns were placed tables, each spread with a profusion of viands, and wines of every species sparkling in vases of crystal. A throng of Genii and other fantastic spirits of each sex danced lasciviously in troops, at the sound of music which issued from beneath.

In the midst of this immense hall a vast multitude was incessantly passing, who severally kept their right hands on their hearts, without once regarding anything around them; they had all the livid paleness of death; their eyes, deep sunk in their sockets, resembled those phosphoric meteors that

glimmer by night in places of interment. Some stalked slowly on, absorbed in profound reverie; some, shrieking with agony, ran furiously about, like tigers wounded with poisoned arrows; whilst others, grinding their teeth in rage, foamed along, more frantic than the wildest maniac. They all avoided each other, and, though surrounded by a multitude that no one could number, each wandered at random, unheedful of the rest, as if alone on a desert which no foot had trodden.

Vathek and Nouronihar, frozen with terror at a sight so baleful, demanded of the Giaour what these appearances might mean, and why these ambulating spectres never withdrew their hands from their hearts.

"Perplex not yourselves," replied he bluntly, "with so much at once, you will soon be acquainted with all; let us haste and present you to Eblis."

They continued their way through the multitude, but, notwithstanding their confidence at first, they were not sufficiently composed to examine with attention the various perspectives of halls and of galleries that opened on the right hand and left, which were all illuminated by torches and braziers, whose flames rose in pyramids to the centre of the vault. At length they came to a place where long curtains, brocaded with crimson and gold, fell from all parts in striking confusion; here the choirs and dances were heard no longer, the light which glimmered came from afar.

After some time Vathek and Nouronihar perceived a gleam brightening through the drapery, and entered a vast tabernacle carpeted with the skins of leopards; an infinity of elders with streaming beards, and Afrits in complete armour, had prostrated themselves before the ascent of a lofty eminence, on the top of which, upon a globe of fire, sat the formidable Eblis. His person was that of a young man, whose noble and regular features seemed to have been tarnished by malignant vapours; in his large eyes appeared both pride and despair; his flowing hair retained some resemblance to that of an angel of light; in his hand, which thunder had blasted, he swayed the iron sceptre that causes the monster Ouranabad, the Afrits, and all the powers of the abyss to tremble; at his presence the heart of the Caliph sank within him, and, for the first time, he fell prostrate on his face. Nouronihar, however, though greatly dismayed, could not help admiring the person of Eblis;

for she expected to have seen some stupendous Giant. Eblis, with a voice more mild than might be imagined, but such as transfused through the soul the deepest melancholy, said:

"Creatures of clay, I receive you into mine empire; ye are numbered amongst my adorers; enjoy whatever this palace affords; the treasures of the preadamite Sultans, their bickering sabres, and those talismans that compel the Dives to open the subterranean expanses of the mountain of Kaf, which communicate with these; there, insatiable as your curiosity may be, shall you find sufficient to gratify it; you shall possess the exclusive privilege of entering the fortress of Aherman, and the halls of Argenk, where are pourtrayed all creatures endowed with intelligence, and the various animals that inhabited the earth prior to the creation of that contemptible being, whom ye denominate the Father of Mankind."

Vathek and Nouronihar, feeling themselves revived and encouraged by this harangue, eagerly said to the Giaour:

"Bring us instantly to the place which contains these precious talismans."

"Come!" answered this wicked Dive, with his malignant grin, "come! and possess all that my Sovereign hath promised, and more."

He then conducted them into a long aisle adjoining the tabernacle, preceding them with hasty steps, and followed by his disciples with the utmost alacrity. They reached, at length, a hall of great extent, and covered with a lofty dome, around which appeared fifty portals of bronze, secured with as many fastenings of iron; a funereal gloom prevailed over the whole scene; here, upon two beds of incorruptible cedar, lay recumbent the fleshless forms of the Preadamite Kings, who had been monarchs of the whole earth; they still possessed enough of life to be conscious of their deplorable condition; their eyes retained a melancholy motion; they regarded each other with looks of the deepest dejection, each holding his right hand motionless on his heart; at their feet were inscribed the events of their several reigns, their power, their pride, and their crimes; Soliman Raad, Soliman Daki, and Soliman Di Gian Ben Gian, who, after having chained up the Dives in the dark caverns of Kaf, became so presumptuous as to doubt of the Supreme Power; all these maintained great state, though not to be compared with the eminence of Soliman Ben Daoud.

This king, so renowned for his wisdom, was on the loftiest elevation, and placed immediately under the dome; he appeared to possess more animation than the rest; though from time to time he laboured with profound sighs, and, like his companions, kept his right hand on his heart; yet his countenance was more composed, and he seemed to be listening to the sullen roar of a vast cataract, visible in part through the grated portals; this was the only sound that intruded on the silence of these doleful mansions. A range of brazen vases surrounded the elevation.

"Remove the covers from these cabalistic depositories," said the Giaour to Vathek, "and avail thyself of the talismans, which will break asunder all these gates of bronze, and not only render thee master of the treasures contained within them, but also of the spirits by which they are guarded."

The Caliph, whom this ominous preliminary had entirely disconcerted, approached the vases with faltering footsteps, and was ready to sink with terror when he heard the groans of Soliman. As he proceeded a voice from the livid lips of the Prophet articulated these words:

"In my lifetime I filled a magnificent throne, having on my right hand twelve thousand seats of gold, where the patriarchs and the prophets heard my doctrines; on my left the sages and doctors, upon as many thrones of silver, were present at all my decisions. Whilst I thus administered justice to innumerable multitudes, the birds of the air librating over me served as a canopy from the rays of the sun; my people flourished, and my palace rose to the clouds; I erected a temple to the Most High, which was the wonder of the universe; but I basely suffered myself to be seduced by the love of women, and a curiosity that could not be restrained by sublunary things; I listened to the counsels of Aherman and the daughter of Pharaoh, and adored fire and the hosts of heaven; I forsook the holy city, and commanded the Genii to rear the stupendous palace of Istakar, and the terrace of the watch-towers, each of which was consecrated to a star; there for a while I enjoyed myself in the zenith of glory and pleasure; not only men, but supernatural existences, were subject also to my will. I began to think, as these unhappy monarchs around had already thought, that the vengeance of Heaven was asleep; when at once the thunder burst my structures asunder and

precipitated me hither; where, however, I do not remain, like the other inhabitants, totally destitute of hope, for an angel of light hath revealed that, in consideration of the piety of my early youth, my woes shall come to an end when this cataract shall for ever cease to flow; till then I am in torments, ineffable torments! an unrelenting fire preys on my heart."

Having uttered this exclamation Soliman raised his hands towards heaven, in token of supplication, and the Caliph discerned through his bosom, which was transparent as crystal, his heart enveloped in flames. At a sight so full of horror Nouronihar fell back, like one petrified, into the arms of Vathek, who cried out with a conclusive sob:

"O Giaour! whither hast thou brought us? Allow us to depart, and I will relinquish all thou hast promised. O Mahomet! remains there no more mercy?"

"None! none!" replied the malicious Dive. "Know, miserable Prince! thou art now in the abode of vengeance and despair; thy heart also will be kindled, like those of the other votaries of Eblis. A few days are allotted thee previous to this fatal period; employ them as thou wilt; recline on these heaps of gold; command the Infernal Potentates; range at thy pleasure through these immense subterranean domains; no barrier shall be shut against thee! as for me, I have fulfilled my mission; I now leave thee to thyself." At these words he vanished.

The Caliph and Nouronihar remained in the most abject affliction; their tears unable to flow, scarcely could they support themselves. At length, taking each other despondingly by the hand, they went faltering from this fatal hall, indifferent which way they turned their steps; every portal opened at their approach; the Dives fell prostrate before them; every reservoir of riches was disclosed to their view; but they no longer felt the incentives of curiosity, pride, or avarice. With like apathy they heard the chorus of Genii, and saw the stately banquets prepared to regale them; they went wandering on from chamber to chamber, hall to hall, and gallery to gallery, all without bounds or limit, all distinguishable by the same lowering gloom, all adorned with the same awful grandeur, all traversed by persons in search of repose and consolation, but who sought them in vain; for every one carried within him a heart tormented in flames: shunned by these various sufferers, who

seemed by their looks to be upbraiding the partners of their guilt, they withdrew from them to wait in direful suspense the moment which should render them to each other the like objects of terror.

"What!" exclaimed Nouronihar, "will the time come when I shall snatch my hand from thine?"

"Ah!" said Vathek, "and shall my eyes never cease to drink from thine long draughts of enjoyment! Shall the moments of our reciprocal ecstasies be reflected on with horror! It was not thou that broughtest me hither; the principles by which Carathis perverted my youth have been the sole cause of my perdition!" Having given vent to these painful expressions, he called to an Afrit, who was stirring up one of the braziers, and bade him fetch the Princess Carathis from the palace of Samarah.

After issuing these orders, the Caliph and Nouronihar continued walking amidst the silent crowd, till they heard voices at the end of the gallery; presuming them to proceed from some unhappy beings, who like themselves were awaiting their final doom, they followed the sound, and found it to come from a small square chamber, where they discovered sitting on sofas five young men of goodly figure, and a lovely female, who were all holding a melancholy conversation by the glimmering of a lonely lamp; each had a gloomy and forlorn air, and two of them were embracing each other with great tenderness. On seeing the Caliph and the daughter of Fakreddin enter, they arose, saluted, and gave them place; then he who appeared the most considerable of the group addressed himself thus to Vathek:

"Strangers! who doubtless are in the same state of suspense with ourselves, as you do not yet bear your hand on your heart, if you are come hither to pass the interval allotted previous to the infliction of our common punishment, condescend to relate the adventures that have brought you to this fatal place, and we in return will acquaint you with ours, which deserve but too well to be heard; we will trace back our crimes to their source, though we are not permitted to repent; this is the only employment suited to wretches like us!"

The Caliph and Nouronihar assented to the proposal, and Vathek began, not without tears and lamentations, a sincere

recital of every circumstance that had passed. When the afflicting narrative was closed, the young man entered on his own.* Each person proceeded in order, and when the fourth prince had reached the midst of his adventures, a sudden noise interrupted him, which caused the vault to tremble and to open.

Immediately a cloud descended, which, gradually dissipating, discovered Carathis on the back of an Afrit, who grievously complained of his burden. She, instantly springing to the ground, advanced towards her son and said:

"What dost thou here in this little square chamber? As the Dives are become subject to thy beck, I expected to have found thee on the throne of the Preadamite Kings."

"Execrable woman!" answered the Caliph, "cursed be the day thou gavest me birth! go, follow this Afrit, let him conduct thee to the hall of the Prophet Soliman; there thou wilt learn to what these palaces are destined, and how much I ought to abhor the impious knowledge thou hast taught me."

"The height of power, to which thou art arrived, has certainly turned thy brain," answered Carathis; "but I ask no more than permission to show my respect for the Prophet. It is, however, proper thou shouldest know, that (as the Afrit has informed me neither of us shall return to Samarah) I requested his permission to arrange my affairs, and he politely consented; availing myself therefore of the few moments allowed me, I set fire to the tower, and consumed in it the mutes, negresses, and serpents which have rendered me so much good service; nor should I have been less kind to Morakanabad, had he not prevented me, by deserting at last to thy brother. As for Bababalouk, who had the folly to return to Samarah, and all the good brotherhood to provide husbands for thy wives, I undoubtedly would have put them to the torture, could I but have allowed them the time; being however in a hurry, I only hung him after having caught him in a snare with thy wives, whilst them I buried alive by the

* See note to the Author's French preface; Beckford has here added the titles of three stories related in the Hall of Eblis. This is all that he has done, the three titles given being inserted in the third French edition, but not in the English preface, between the paragraphs separated by an asterisk. Beckford does not appear ever to have proceeded further with these tales than the titles.

help of my negresses, who thus spent their last moments greatly to their satisfaction. With respect to Dilara, who ever stood high in my favour, she hath evinced the greatness of her mind by fixing herself near in the service of one of the Magi, and I think will soon be our own."

Vathek, too much cast down to express the indignation excited by such a discourse, ordered the Afrit to remove Carathis from his presence, and continued immersed in thought, which his companion durst not disturb.

Carathis, however, eagerly entered the dome of Soliman, and, without regarding in the least the groans of the Prophet, undauntedly removed the covers of the vases, and violently seized on the talismans; then, with a voice more loud than had hitherto been heard within these mansions, she compelled the Dives to disclose to her the most secret treasures, the most profound stores, which the Afrit himself had not seen; she passed by rapid descents known only to Eblis and his most favoured potentates, and thus penetrated the very entrails of the earth, where breathes the Sansar, or icy wind of death; nothing appalled her dauntless soul; she perceived, however, in all the inmates who bore their hands on their heart a little singularity, not much to her taste. As she was emerging from one of the abysses, Eblis stood forth to her view, but, notwithstanding he displayed the full effulgence of his infernal majesty, she preserved her countenance unaltered, and even paid her compliments with considerable firmness.

This superb Monarch thus answered: "Princess, whose knowledge and whose crimes have merited a conspicuous rank in my empire, thou dost well to employ the leisure that remains; for the flames and torments, which are ready to seize on thy heart, will not fail to provide thee with full employment." He said this, and was lost in the curtains of his tabernacle.

Carathis paused for a moment with surprise; but, resolved to follow the advice of Eblis, she assembled all the choirs of Genii, and all the Dives, to pay her homage; thus marched she in triumph through a vapour of perfumes, amidst the acclamations of all the malignant spirits, with most of whom she had formed a previous acquaintance; she even attempted to dethrone one of the Solimans for the purpose of usurping his place, when a voice, proceeding from the abyss of Death,

proclaimed, "All is accomplished!" Instantaneously the haughty forehead of the intrepid Princess was corrugated with agony; she uttered a tremendous yell, and fixed, no more to be withdrawn, her right hand upon her heart, which was become a receptacle of eternal fire.

In this delirium, forgetting all ambitious projects and her thirst for that knowledge which should ever be hidden from mortals, she overturned the offerings of the Genii, and, having execrated the hour she was begotten and the womb that had borne her, glanced off in a whirl that rendered her invisible, and continued to revolve without intermission.

At almost the same instant the same voice announced to the Caliph, Nouronihar, the five princes, and the princess, the awful and irrevocable decree. Their hearts immediately took fire, and they at once lost the most precious of the gifts of Heaven—Hope. These unhappy beings recoiled with looks of the most furious distraction; Vathek beheld in the eyes of Nouronihar nothing but rage and vengeance, nor could she discern aught in his but aversion and despair. The two princes who were friends, and till that moment had preserved their attachment, shrunk back, gnashing their teeth with mutual and unchangeable hatred. Kaplah and his sister made reciprocal gestures of imprecation, whilst the two other princes testified their horror for each other by the most ghastly convulsions, and screams that could not be smothered. All severally plunged themselves into the accursed multitude, there to wander in an eternity of unabating anguish.

Such was, and such should be, the punishment of unrestrained passions and atrocious actions! Such is, and such should be, the chastisement of blind ambition, that would transgress those bounds which the Creator hath prescribed to human knowledge; and, by aiming at discoveries reserved for pure Intelligence, acquire that infatuated pride, which perceives not the condition appointed to man is to be ignorant and humble.

Thus the Caliph Vathek, who, for the sake of empty pomp and forbidden power, had sullied himself with a thousand crimes, became a prey to grief without end, and remorse without mitigation; whilst the humble and despised Gulchenrouz passed whole ages in undisturbed tranquillity, and the pure happiness of childhood.

DREAMS,

WAKING THOUGHTS,

AND

INCIDENTS;

IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS

FROM

VARIOUS PARTS OF EUROPE.

LETTER I.

June 19th, 1780.—Shall I tell you my dreams?—To give an account of my time is doing, I assure you, but little better. Never did there exist a more ideal being. A frequent mist hovers before my eyes, and, through its medium, I see objects so faint and hazy, that both their colours and forms are apt to delude me. This is a rare confession, say the wise, for a traveller to make: pretty accounts will such a one give of outlandish countries: his correspondents must reap great benefit, no doubt, from such purblind observations. But stop, my good friends; patience a moment!—I really have not the vanity of pretending to make a single remark, during the whole of my journey: if —— be contented with my visionary way of gazing, I am perfectly pleased; and shall write away as freely as Mr. A., Mr. B., Mr. C., and a million others whose letters are the admiration of the politest circles.

All through Kent did I doze as usual; now and then I opened my eyes to take in an idea or two of the green, woody country through which I was passing; then closed them again; transported myself back to my native hills; thought I led a choir of those I loved best through their shades; and was happy in the arms of illusion. The sun set before I recovered my senses enough to discover plainly the variegated slopes near Canterbury, waving with slender birch-trees, and gilt with a profusion of broom. I thought myself still in my beloved solitude, but missed the companions of my slumbers. Where are they?—Behind yon blue hills, perhaps, or t'other side of that thick forest. My fancy was travelling after these deserters, till we reached the town; vile enough o' conscience, and fit only to be passed in one's sleep. The moment after I got out of the carriage, brought me to the cathedral; an old haunt of mine. I had always venerated its lofty pillars, dim aisles, and

mysterious arches. Last night they were more solemn than ever, and echoed no other sound than my steps. I strayed about the choir and chapels, till they grew so dark and dismal, that I was half inclined to be frightened; looked over my shoulder; thought of spectres that have an awkward trick of syllabling men's names in dreary places; and fancied a sepulchral voice exclaiming: "Worship my toe at Ghent; my ribs at Florence; my skull at Bologna, Sienna, and Rome. Beware how you neglect this order; for my bones, as well as my spirit, have the miraculous property of being here, there, and everywhere." These injunctions, you may suppose, were received in a becoming manner, and noted all down in my pocket-book by inspiration (for I could not see), and hurrying into the open air, I was whirled away in the dark to Margate. Don't ask what were my dreams thither:—nothing but horrors, deep-vaulted tombs, and pale, though lovely figures, extended upon them; shrill blasts that sung in my ears, and filled me with sadness, and the recollection of happy hours, fleeting away, perhaps for ever! I was not sorry, when the bustle of our coming-in dispelled these phantoms. The change, however, in point of scenery was not calculated to dissipate my gloom; for the first object in this world that presented itself, was a vast expanse of sea, just visible by the gleamings of the moon, bathed in watery clouds; a chill air ruffled the waves. I went to shiver a few melancholy moments on the shore. How often did I try to wish away the reality of my separation from those I love, and attempt to persuade myself it was but a dream!

This morning I found myself more cheerfully disposed, by the queer Dutch faces with short pipes and ginger-bread complexions that came smirking and scraping to get us on board their respective vessels; but, as I had a ship engaged for me before, their invitations were all in vain. The wind blows fair; and, should it continue of the same mind a few hours longer, we shall have no cause to complain of our passage. Adieu! Think of me sometimes. If you write immediately, I shall receive your letter at the Hague.

It is a bright sunny evening: the sea reflects a thousand glowing colours, and, in a minute or two, I shall be gliding on its surface.

LETTER II.

OSTEND, *June 21st.*

T'other minute I was in Greece, gathering the bloom of Hymettus, but now I am landed in Flanders, smoked with tobacco, and half poisoned with garlic. Were I to remain ten days at Ostend, I should scarcely have one delightful vision; 'tis so unclassic a place—nothing but preposterous Flemish roofs disgust your eyes when you cast them upwards; swaggering Dutchmen and mongrel barbers are the principal objects they meet with below. I should esteem myself in luck, were the nuisances of this seaport confined only to two senses; but, alas! the apartment above my head proves a squalling brattery, and the sounds which proceed from it are so loud and frequent, that a person might think himself in limbo, without any extravagance.

Am I not an object of pity, when I tell you that I was tormented yesterday by a similar cause? But I know not how it is; your violent complainers are the least apt to excite compassion. I believe, notwithstanding, if another rising generation should lodge above me at the next inn, I shall grow as scurrilous as Dr. Smollett, and be dignified with the appellation of the Younger Smelfungus. Well, let those make out my diploma that will, I am determined to vent my spleen, and like Lucifer, unable to enjoy comfort myself, tease others with the details of my vexations. You must know, then, since I am resolved to grumble, that, tired with my passage, I went to the Capuchin church, a large solemn building, in search of silence and solitude; but here again was I disappointed. Half-a-dozen squeaking fiddles fugued and flourished away in the galleries, and as many paralytic monks gabbled before the altars, while a whole posse of devotees, in long white hoods and flannels, were sweltering on either side.

Such piety, in warm weather, was no very fragrant circumstance; so I sought the open air again as fast as I was able. The serenity of the evening, joined to the desire I had of casting another glance over the ocean, tempted me to the ramparts. There, at least, thought I to myself, I may range undisturbed, and talk with my old friends the breezes, and

address my discourse to the waves, and be as romantic and whimsical as I please; but it happened that I had scarcely begun my apostrophe, before out flaunted a whole rank of officers, with ladies and abbés and puppy dogs, singing, and flirting, and making such a hubbub, that I had not one peaceful moment to observe the bright tints of the western horizon, or enjoy the series of antique ideas with which a calm sunset never fails to inspire me.

Finding, therefore, no quiet abroad, I returned to my inn, and should have gone immediately to bed, in hopes of relapsing into the bosom of dreams and delusions; but the limbo I mentioned before grew so very outrageous, that I was obliged to postpone my rest till sugar-plums and nursery eloquence had hushed it to repose. At length peace was restored, and about eleven o'clock I fell into a slumber, during which the most lovely Sicilian prospects filled the eye of my fancy. I anticipated the classic scenes of that famous island, and forgot every sorrow in the meadows of Enna.

Next morning, awakened by the sunbeams, I arose quite refreshed by the agreeable impressions of my dream, and filled with presages of future happiness in the climes which had inspired them. No other idea but such as Trinacria and Naples suggested, haunted me whilst travelling to Ghent. I neither heard the vile Flemish dialect which was talking around me, nor noticed formal avenues and marshy country which we passed. When we stopped to change horses, I closed my eyes upon the whole scene, and was transported immediately to some Grecian solitude, where Theocritus and his shepherds were filling the air with melody. To one so far gone in poetic antiquity, Ghent is not the most likely place to recall his attention; and I know nothing more about it, than that it is a large, ill-paved, dismal-looking city, with a decent proportion of convents and chapels, stuffed with monuments, brazen gates, and glittering marbles. In the great church were two or three pictures by Rubens, mechanically excellent, but these realities were not designed in so graceful a manner as to divert my attention from the mere descriptions Pausanias gives us of the works of Grecian artists, and I would at any time fall asleep in a Flemish cathedral, for a vision of the temple of Olympian Jupiter. But I think I hear, at this moment, some grave and respectable personage chiding me

for such levities, and saying, "Really, Sir, you had better stay at home, and dream in your great chair, than give yourself the trouble of going post through Europe, in search of inspiring places to fall asleep. If Flanders and Holland are to be dreamed over at this rate, you had better take ship at once, and doze all the way to Italy." Upon my word, I should not have much objection to that scheme; and, if some cabalist would but transport me in an instant to the summit of Ætna, any body might slop through the Low Countries that pleased.

Being, however, so far advanced, there was no retracting; and as it is now three or four years since I have almost abandoned the hopes of discovering a necromancer, I resolved to journey along with Quiet and Content for my companions. These two comfortable deities have, I believe, taken Flanders under their especial protection; every step one advances discovering some new proof of their influence. The neatness of the houses, and the universal cleanliness of the villages, show plainly that their inhabitants live in ease and good humour. All is still and peaceful in these fertile lowlands: the eye meets nothing but round, unmeaning faces at every door, and harmless stupidity smiling at every window. The beasts, as placid as their masters, graze on without any disturbance; and I scarcely recollect to have heard one grunting swine or snarling mastiff during my whole progress. Before every village is a wealthy dunghill, not at all offensive, because but seldom disturbed; and there they bask in the sun, and wallow at their ease, till the hour of death and bacon arrives, when capacious paunches await them. If I may judge from the healthy looks and reposed complexions of the Flemings, they have every reason to expect a peaceful tomb.

But it is high time to leave our swinish moralities behind us, and to jog on towards Antwerp. More rich pastures, more ample fields of grain, more flourishing willows!—a boundless plain before this city, dotted with cows and flowers, from whence its spires and quaint roofs are seen to advantage. The pale colours of the sky, and a few gleams of watery sunshine, gave a true Flemish cast to the scenery, and everything appeared so consistent, that I had not a shadow of pretence to think myself asleep.

After crossing a broad, noble river, edged on one side by

beds of osiers beautifully green, and on the other by gates and turrets preposterously ugly, we came through several streets of lofty houses to our inn. Its situation in the "Place de Mer," a vast open space surrounded by buildings above buildings, and roof above roof, has something striking and singular. A tall gilt crucifix of bronze, sculptured by some famous artist, adds to its splendour; and the tops of some tufted trees, seen above a line of magnificent hotels, have no bad effect in the perspective.

It was almost dusk when we arrived; and as I am very partial to new objects discovered by this dubious visionary light, I went immediately a-rambling. Not a sound disturbed my meditations; there were no groups of squabbling children or talkative old women. The whole town seemed retired into their inmost chambers; and I kept winding and turning about, from street to street, and from alley to alley, without meeting a single inhabitant. Now and then, indeed, one or two women in long cloaks and mantles glided about at a distance; but their dress was so shroud-like, and their whole appearance so ghostly, that I was more than half afraid to accost them. As the night approached, the ranges of buildings grew more and more dim, and the silence which reigned amongst them more awful. The canals, which in some places intersect the streets, were likewise in perfect solitude, and there was just light sufficient for me to observe on the still waters the reflection of the structures above them. Except two or three tapers glimmering through the casements, no one circumstance indicated human existence. I might, without being thought very romantic, have imagined myself in the city of petrified people, which Arabian fabulists are so fond of describing. Were any one to ask my advice upon the subject of retirement, I should tell him,—By all means repair to Antwerp. No village amongst the Alps, or hermitage upon Mount Lebanon, is less disturbed: you may pass your days in this great city without being the least conscious of its sixty thousand inhabitants, unless you visit the churches. There, indeed, are to be heard a few devout whispers, and sometimes, to be sure, the bells make a little chiming; but walk about, as I do, in the twilights of midsummer, and be assured your ears will be free from all molestation.

You can have no idea how many strange, amusing fancies

played around me whilst I wandered along; nor how delighted I was with the novelty of my situation. But a few days ago, thought I within myself, I was in the midst of all the tumult and uproar of London: now, as if by some magic influence, I am transported to a city equally remarkable for streets and edifices, but whose inhabitants seem cast into a profound repose. What a pity that we cannot borrow some small share of this soporific disposition! It would temper that restless spirit which throws us sometimes into such dreadful convulsions. However, let us not be too precipitate in desiring so dead a calm; the time may arrive when, like Antwerp, we may sink into the arms of forgetfulness; when a fine verdure may carpet our Exchange, and passengers traverse the Strand, without any danger of being smothered in crowds, or lost in the confusion of carriages.

Reflecting, in this manner, upon the silence of the place, contrasted with the important bustle which formerly rendered it so famous, I insensibly drew near to the cathedral, and found myself, before I was aware, under its stupendous tower. It is difficult to conceive an object more solemn or imposing than this edifice at the hour I first beheld it. Dark shades hindered my examining the lower galleries or windows; their elaborate carved work was invisible; nothing but huge masses of building met my sight, and the tower, shooting up four hundred and sixty-six feet into the air, received an additional importance from the gloom which prevailed below. The sky being perfectly clear, several stars twinkled through the mosaic of the spire, and added not a little to its enchanted effect. I longed to ascend it that instant, to stretch myself out upon its very summit, and calculate from so sublime an elevation the influence of the planets.

Whilst I was indulging my astrological reveries, a ponderous bell struck ten, and such a peal of chimes succeeded, as shook the whole edifice, notwithstanding its bulk, and drove me away in a hurry. No mob obstructed my passage, and I ran through a succession of streets, free and unmolested, as if I had been skimming along over the downs of Wiltshire. My servants conversing before the hotel were the only sounds which the great "Place de Mer" echoed.

This universal stillness was the more pleasing, when I looked back upon those scenes of horror and outcry which filled

London but a week or two ago, when danger was not confined to night only, and the environs of the capital, but haunted our streets at midday. Here, I could wander over an entire city; stray by the port, and venture through the most obscure alleys, without a single apprehension; without beholding a sky red and portentous with the light of fires, or hearing the confused and terrifying murmurs of shouts and groans, mingled with the reports of artillery. I can assure you, I think myself very fortunate to have escaped the possibility of another such week of desolation, and to be peaceably roosted at Antwerp. Were I not still fatigued with my heavy progress through sands and quagmires, I should descant a little longer upon the blessings of so quiet a metropolis, but it is growing late, and I must retire to enjoy it.

LETTER III.

ANTWERP, *June 23rd.*

My windows look full upon the Place de Mer, and the sun, beaming through their white curtains, awoke me from a dream of Arabian happiness. Imagination had procured herself a tent on the mountains of Sanaa, covered with coffee-trees in bloom. She was presenting me the essence of their flowers, and was just telling me that you possessed a pavilion on a neighbouring hill, when the sunshine dispelled the vision; and opening my eyes, I found myself pent in by Flemish spires and buildings: no hills, no verdure, no aromatic breezes, no hope of being in your vicinity: all were vanished with the shadows of fancy, and I was left alone to deplore your absence. But I think it rather selfish to wish you here, for what pleasure could pacing from one dull church to another, afford a person of your turn? I don't believe you would catch a taste for blubbering Magdalens and coarse Madonnas, by lolling in Rubens' chair; nor do I believe a view of the Ostades and Snyders, so liberally scattered in every collection, would greatly improve your pencil.

After breakfast this morning I began my pilgrimage to all those illustrious cabinets. First, I went to Monsieur Van Lencren's, who possesses a suite of apartments, lined, from the base to the cornice, with the rarest productions of the Flemish

school. Heavens forbid I should enter into a detail of their niceties! I might as well count the dew-drops upon any of Van Huysem's flower-pieces, or the pimples on their possessor's countenance; a very good sort of man, indeed; but from whom I was not at all sorry to be delivered.

My joy was, however, of short duration, as a few minutes brought me into the courtyard of the Chanoin Knyfe's habitation; a snug abode, well furnished with easy chairs and orthodox couches. After viewing the rooms on the first floor, we mounted a gentle staircase, and entered an ante-chamber, which those who delight in the imitations of art rather than of nature, in the likenesses of joint stools and the portraits of tankards, would esteem most capitally adorned: but it must be confessed, that, amongst these uninteresting performances, are dispersed a few striking Berghems and agreeable Polemburgs. In the gallery adjoining, two or three Rosa de Tivolis merit observation; and a large Teniers, representing a St. Anthony surrounded by a malicious fry of imps and leering devilesses, is well calculated to display the whimsical buffoonery of a Dutch imagination.

I was observing this strange medley, when the Canon made his appearance; and a most prepossessing figure he has, according to Flemish ideas. In my humble opinion his Reverence looked a little muddled or so; and, to be sure, the description I afterwards heard of his style of living, favours not a little my surmises. This worthy dignitary, what with his private fortune and the good things of the church, enjoys a revenue of about five thousand pounds sterling, which he contrives to get rid of in the joys of the table and the encouragement of the pencil.

His servants, perhaps, assist not a little in the expenditure of so comfortable an income; the Canon being upon a very social footing with them all. At four o'clock in the afternoon, a select party attend him in his coach to an alehouse about a league from the city; where a table, well spread with jugs of beer and handsome cheeses, waits their arrival. After enjoying this rural fare, the same equipage conducts them back again, by all accounts, much faster than they came; which may well be conceived, as the coachman is one of the brightest wits of the entertainment.

My compliments, alas! were not much relished, you may

suppose, by this jovial personage. I said a few favourable words of Polemburg, and offered up a small tribute of praise to the memory of Berghem; but, as I could not prevail upon Mynheer Knyfe to expand, I made one of my best bows, and left him to the enjoyment of his domestic felicity.

In my way home, I looked into another cabinet, the greatest ornament of which was a most sublime thistle by Snyders, of the heroic size, and so faithfully imitated that I dare say no ass could see it unmoved. At length, it was lawful to return home; and as I positively refused visiting any more cabinets in the afternoon, I sent for a harpsichord of Rucker, and played myself quite out of the Netherlands.

It was late before I finished my musical excursion, and I took advantage of this dusky moment to revisit the cathedral. A flight of starlings was fluttering about one of the pinnacles of the tower; their faint chirpings were the only sounds that broke the stillness of the air. Not a human form appeared at any of the windows around; no footsteps were audible in the opening before the grand entrance; and, during the half hour I spent in walking to and fro beneath the spire, one solitary Franciscan was the only creature that accosted me. From him I learnt that a grand service was to be performed next day in honour of St. John the Baptist, and the best music in Flanders would be called forth on the occasion. As I had seen cabinets enough to form some slight judgment of Flemish painting, I determined to stay one day longer at Antwerp to hear a little how its inhabitants were disposed to harmony.

Having taken this resolution, I formed an acquaintance with Mynheer Vander Bosch, the first organist of the place, who very kindly permitted me to sit next him in his gallery during the celebration of high mass. The service ended, I strayed about the aisles, and examined the innumerable chapels which decorate them, whilst Mynheer Vander Bosch thundered and lightened away upon his huge organ with fifty stops.

When the first flashes of execution were a little subsided, I took an opportunity of surveying the celebrated "Descent from the Cross," which has ever been esteemed one of Rubens's chef d'œuvres, and for which they say old Lewis Baboon offered no less a sum than forty thousand florins. The prin-

cipal figure has, doubtless, a very meritorious paleness, and looks as dead as an artist could desire; the rest of the group have been so liberally praised, that there is no occasion to add another tittle of commendation. A swinging St. Christopher, fording a brook with a child on his shoulders, cannot fail of attracting your attention. This colossal personage is painted on the folding-doors which defend the capital performance just mentioned from vulgar eyes; and here Rubens has selected a very proper subject to display the gigantic coarseness of his pencil.

Had this powerful artist confined his strength to the representation of agonizing thieves and sturdy Barabbases, nobody would have been readier than your humble servant to offer incense at his shrine, but when I find him lost in the flounces of the Virgin's drapery, or bewildered in the graces of St. Catherine's smile, pardon me if I withhold my adoration. After I had most dutifully observed all the Rubenses in the church, I walked half over Antwerp in search of St. John's relics, which were moving about in procession, but an heretical wind having extinguished all their tapers, and discomposed the canopy over the Bon Dieu, I cannot say much for the grandeur of the spectacle. If my eyes were not greatly regaled by the Saint's magnificence, my ears were greatly affected in the evening by the music which sang forth his praises. The cathedral was crowded with devotees and perfumed with incense. Several of its marble altars gleamed with the reflection of lamps, and, altogether, the spectacle was new and imposing. I knelt very piously in one of the aisles while a symphony in the best style of Corelli, performed with taste and feeling, transported me to Italian climates, and I was quite vexed, when a cessation dissolved the charm, to think that I had still so many tramontane regions to pass, before I could in effect reach that classic country, where my spirit had so long taken up its abode. Finding it was in vain to wish or expect any preternatural interposition, and perceiving no conscious angel, or Loretto-vehicle, waiting in some dark consecrated corner to bear me away, I humbly returned to my hotel in the Place de Mer, and soothed myself with some terrestrial harmony; till, my eyes growing heavy, I fell fast asleep, and entered the empire of dreams, according to custom, by its ivory portal. What passed in those shadowy realms is too thin and unsubstantial to be committed

to paper. The very breath of waking mortals would dissipate all the train, and drive them eternally away; give me leave, therefore, to omit the relation of my visionary travels, and have the patience to pursue a sketch of my real ones from Antwerp to the Hague.

Monday, June 26th, we were again upon the pavé, rattling and jumbling along between clipped hedges and blighted avenues. The plagues of Egypt have been renewed, one might almost imagine, in this country, by the appearance of the oak-trees: not a leaf have the insects spared. After having had the displeasure of seeing no other objects for several hours, but these blasted rows, the scene changed to vast tracts of level country, buried in sand, and smothered with heath; the particular character of which I had but too good an opportunity of intimately knowing, as a tortoise might have kept pace with us without being once out of breath.

Towards evening, we entered the dominions of the United Provinces, and had all their glory of canals, track-shuyts, and windmills before us. The minute neatness of the villages, their red roofs, and the lively green of the willows which shade them, corresponded with the ideas I had formed of Chinese prospects; a resemblance which was not diminished upon viewing on every side the level scenery of enamelled meadows, with stripes of clear water across them, and innumerable barges gliding busily along. Nothing could be finer than the weather; it improved each moment, as if propitious to my exotic fancies; and, at sunset, not one single cloud obscured the horizon. Several storks were parading by the water-side, amongst flags and osiers; and, as far as the eye could reach, large herds of beautifully spotted cattle were enjoying the plenty of their pastures. I was perfectly in the environs of Canton, or Ning Po, till we reached Meerdyke. You know fumigations are always the current recipe in romance to break an enchantment; as soon, therefore, as I left my carriage, and entered my inn, the clouds of tobacco which filled every one of its apartments dispersed my Chinese imaginations, and reduced me in an instant to Holland.

Why should I enlarge upon my adventures at Meerdyke? To tell you that its inhabitants are the most uncouth bipeds in the universe would be nothing very new or entertaining; so let me at once pass over the village, leave Rotterdam, and

DELFT HAVEN.

even Delft, that great parent of pottery, and transport you with a wave of my pen to the Hague.

As the evening was rather warm, I immediately walked out to enjoy the shade of the long avenue which leads to Scheveling. It was fresh and pleasant enough, but I breathed none of those genuine woody perfumes, which exhale from the depths of forests, and which allure my imagination at once to the haunts of Pan and the good old Sylvanus. However, I was far from displeased with my ramble; and, consoling myself with the hopes of shortly reposing in the sylvan labyrinths of Nemi, I proceeded to the village on the sea-coast, which terminates the perspective. Almost every cottage door being open to catch the air, I had an opportunity of looking into their neat apartments. Tables, shelves, earthenware, all glisten with cleanliness; the country people were drinking tea, after the fatigues of the day, and talking over its bargains and contrivances.

I left them, to walk on the beach, and was so charmed with the vast azure expanse of ocean, which opened suddenly upon me, that I remained there a full half hour. More than two hundred vessels of different sizes were in sight, the last sunbeams purpling their sails, and casting a path of innumerable brilliants athwart the waves. What would I not have given to follow this shining track! It might have conducted me straight to those fortunate western climates, those happy isles which you are so fond of painting, and I of dreaming about. But, unluckily, this passage was the only one my neighbours the Dutch were ignorant of. To be sure they have islands rich in spices, and blessed with the sun's particular attention, but which their government, I am apt to imagine, renders by no means fortunate.

Abandoning therefore all hopes at present of this adventurous voyage, I returned towards the Hague, and, in my way home, looked into a country-house of the late Count Bentinck, with parterres and bosquets by no means resembling (one should conjecture) the gardens of the Hesperides. But, considering that the whole group of trees, terraces, and verdure were in a manner created out of hills of sand, the place may claim some portion of merit. The walks and alleys have all the stiffness and formality our ancestors admired; but the intermediate spaces, being dotted with clumps and sprinkled

with flowers, are imagined in Holland to be in the English style. An Englishman ought certainly to behold it with partial eyes, since every possible attempt has been made to twist it into the taste of his country.

I need not say how liberally I bestowed my encomiums on Count B.'s tasteful intentions; nor how happy I was, when I had duly serpentized over his garden, to find myself once more in the grand avenue. All the way home, I reflected upon the economical disposition of the Dutch, who raise gardens from heaps of sand, and cities out of the bosom of the waters. I had still a further proof of this thrifty turn, since the first object I met was an unwieldy fellow (not able, or unwilling, perhaps, to afford horses) airing his carcass in a one-dog chair. The poor animal puffed and panted,—Mynheer smoked, and gaped around him with the most blessed indifference.

LETTER IV.

June 30th.

I dedicated the morning to the Prince of Orange's cabinet of paintings and curiosities both natural and artificial. Amongst the pictures which amused me the most is a St. Anthony, by Hell-fire Brughel, who has shown himself right worthy of the title; for a more diabolical variety of imps never entered the human imagination. Brughel has made his saint take refuge in a ditch filled with harpies and creeping things innumerable, whose malice, one should think, would have lost Job himself the reputation of patience. Castles of steel and fiery turrets glare on every side, from whence issue a band of junior devils. These seem highly entertained with pinking poor St. Anthony, and whispering, I warrant ye, filthy tales in his ear. Nothing can be more rueful than the patient's countenance; more forlorn than his beard; more pious than his eye, which forms a strong contrast to the pert winks and insidious glances of his persecutors; some of whom, I need not mention, are evidently of the female kind.

But really I am quite ashamed of having detained you in such bad company so long; and, had I a moment to spare, you should be introduced to a better set in this gallery, where some of the most exquisite Berghems and Wouvermans I

ever beheld would delight you for hours. I do not think you would look much at the Polemburgs; there are but two, and one of them is very far from capital; in short I am in a great hurry; so pardon me, Carlo Cignani! if I don't do justice to your merit; and excuse me, Potter! if I pass by your herds without leaving a tribute of admiration.

Mynheer Van Something is as eager to precipitate my motions as I was to get out of the damps and perplexities of Soorflect yesterday evening; so mounting a very indifferent staircase, he led me to a suite of garret-like apartments; which, considering the meanness of their exterior, I was much surprised to find stored with some of the most valuable productions of the Indies. Gold cups enriched with gems, models of Chinese palaces in ivory, glittering armour of Hindostan, and Japan caskets, filled every corner of this awkward treasury. What of all its baubles pleased me most was a large coffer of some precious wood, containing enamelled flasks of oriental essences, enough to perfume a zenana, and so fragrant that I thought the Mogul himself a Dutchman, for lavishing them upon this inelegant nation. If disagreeable fumes, as I mentioned before, dissolve enchantments, such aromatic oils have doubtless the power of raising them; for, whilst I scented their fragrance, scarcely could anything have persuaded me that I was not in the wardrobe of Hecuba,—

"Where treasur'd odours breath'd a costly scent."

I saw, or seemed to see, the arched apartments, the procession of venerable matrons, the consecrated vestments: the very temple began to rise upon my sight, when a Dutch porpoise approaching to make me a low bow; his complaisance was full as notorious as Satan's, when, according to Catholic legends, he took leave of Calvin or Dr. Faustus. No spell can resist a fumigation of this nature; away fled palace, Hecuba, matrons, temple, etc. I looked up, and lo! I was in a garret. As poetry is but too often connected with this lofty situation, you won't wonder much at my flight. Being a little recovered from it, I tottered down the staircase, entered the cabinets of natural history, and was soon restored to my sober senses. A grave hippopotamus contributed a great deal to their re-establishment.

The butterflies, I must needs confess, were very near leading

me another dance: I thought of their native hills and beloved flowers, of Haynang and Nan-Hoa; * but the jargon which was prating all around me prevented the excursion, and I summoned a decent share of attention for that ample chamber which has been appropriated to bottled snakes and pickled fœtuses.

After having enjoyed the same spectacle in the British Museum, no very new or singular objects can be selected in this. One of the rarest articles it contains is the representation in wax of a human head, most dexterously flayed indeed! Rapturous encomiums have been bestowed by amateurs on this performance. A German professor could hardly believe it artificial; and, prompted by the love of truth, set his teeth in this delicious morsel to be convinced of its reality. My faith was less hazardously established; and I moved off, under the conviction that art had never produced anything more horridly natural.

It was one o'clock before I got through the mineral kingdom; and another hour passed before I could quit with decorum the regions of stuffed birds and marine productions. At length my departure was allowable; and I went to dine at Sir Joseph Yorke's, with all nations and languages. The Hague is the place in the world for a motley assembly, and, in some humours, I think such the most agreeable.

After coffee I strayed to the great wood, which, considering that it almost touches the town with its boughs, is wonderfully forest-like. Not a branch being ever permitted to be lopped, the oaks and beeches retain their natural luxuriance, and form some of the most picturesque groups conceivable. In some places their straight boles rise sixty feet without a bough; in others, they are bent fantastically over the alleys, which turn and wind about just as a painter would desire. I followed them with eagerness and curiosity, sometimes deviating from my path amongst tufts of fern and herbage.

In these cool retreats I could not believe myself near canals and windmills; the Dutch formalities were all forgotten whilst contemplating the broad masses of foliage above, and the wild flowers and grasses below. Several hares and rabbits scudded by me while I sat; and the birds were chirping their evening song. Their preservation does credit to the police of the

* Hills in the neighbourhood of Quang-Tong.

AMSTERDAM, FROM THE QUAY.

country, which is so exact and well regulated as to suffer no outrage within the precincts of this extensive wood, the depth and thickness of which seem calculated to favour half the sins of a capital.

Relying upon this comfortable security, I lingered unmolested amongst the beeches till the ruddy gold of the setting sun ceased to glow on their foliage; then taking the nearest path, I suffered myself, though not without regret, to be conducted out of this fresh sylvan scene to the dusty, pompous parterres of the Greffier Fagel. Every flower that wealth can purchase diffuses its perfume on one side; whilst every stench a canal can exhale, poisons the air on the other. These sluggish puddles defy all the power of the United Provinces, and retain the freedom of stinking in spite of their endeavours: but perhaps I am too bold in my assertion; for I have no authority to mention any attempts to purify these noxious pools. Who knows but their odour is congenial to a Dutch constitution? One should be inclined to this supposition by the numerous banqueting-rooms and pleasure-houses which hang directly above their surface, and seem calculated on purpose to enjoy them. If frogs were not excluded from the magistrature of their country (and I cannot but think it a little hard that they are), one should not wonder at this choice. Such burgomasters might erect their pavilions in such situations. But, after all, I am not greatly surprised at the fishiness of their site, since very slight authority would persuade me there was a period when Holland was all water, and the ancestors of the present inhabitants fish. A certain oysterishness of eye and flabbiness of complexion are almost proofs sufficient of this aquatic descent: and pray tell me for what purpose are such galligaskins as the Dutch burthen themselves with contrived, but to tuck up a flouncing tail, and thus cloak the deformity of their dolphin-like terminations?

Having done penance for some time in the damp alleys which line the borders of these lazy waters, I was led through corkscrew sand-walks to a vast flat, sparingly scattered over with vegetation. To puzzle myself in such a labyrinth there was no temptation, so taking advantage of the lateness of the hour, and muttering a few complimentary promises of returning at the first opportunity, I escaped the ennui of this endless scrubbery, and got home, with the determination of

being wiser and less curious if ever my stars should bring me again to the Hague. To-morrow I bid it adieu, and if the horses but second my endeavours, shall be delivered in a few days from the complicated plagues of the United Provinces.

LETTER V.

HAERLEM, *July* 1*st.*

The sky was clear and blue when we left the Hague, and we travelled along a shady road for about an hour, then down sunk the carriage into a sand-bed, and we were dragged along so slowly that I fell into a profound repose. How long it lasted is not material; but when I awoke, we were rumbling through Leyden. There is no need to write a syllable in honour of this illustrious city: its praises have already been sung and said by fifty professors, who have declaimed in its university, and smoked in its gardens. So let us get out of it as fast as we can, and breathe the cool air of the wood near Haerlem, where we arrived just as day declined. Hay was making in the fields, and perfumed the country far and wide with its reviving fragrance. I promised myself a pleasant walk in the groves, took up Gesner, and began to have pretty pastoral ideas; but when I approached the nymphs that were dispersed on the meads, and saw faces that would have dishonoured a flounder, and heard accents that would have confounded a hog, all my dislike to the walking filth of the Low Countries returned. I let fall the garlands I had wreathed for the shepherds; we jumped into the carriage, and were driven off to the town. Every avenue to it swarmed with people, whose bustle and agitation seemed to announce that something extraordinary was going forward. Upon inquiry I found it was the great fair at Haerlem; and before we had advanced much farther, our carriage was surrounded by idlers and gingerbread-eaters of all denominations. Passing the gate, we came to a cluster of little illuminated booths beneath a grove, glittering with toys and looking-glasses. It was not without difficulty that we reached our inn, and then the plague was to procure chambers; at last we were accommodated, and the first moment I could call my own has been dedicated to you.

You won't be surprised at the nonsense I have written, since I tell you the scene of the riot and uproar from whence it bears date. At this very moment the confused murmur of voices and music stops all regular proceedings: old women and children tattling; apes, bears, and show-boxes under the windows; French rattling, English swearing, outrageous Italians, frisking minstrels; *tambours de basque* at every corner; myself distracted; a confounded squabble of cooks and haranguing German couriers just arrived, their masters following open-mouthed; nothing to eat, the steam of ham and flesh-pots all the while provoking their appetite; Mynheers very busy with the realities, and smoking as deliberately as if in a solitary lusthuys over the laziest canal in the Netherlands; squeaking chambermaids in the galleries above, and prudish dames below, half inclined to receive the golden solicitations of certain beauties for admittance, but positively refusing them the moment some creditable personage appears; eleven o'clock strikes; half the lights in the fair are extinguished; scruples grow less and less delicate; Mammon prevails, darkness and complaisance succeed. Good-night; may you sleep better than I shall.

LETTER VI.

UTRECHT, *July 2nd.*

Well, thank Heaven, Amsterdam is behind us! How I got thither signifies not one farthing; it was all along a canal, as usual. The weather was hot enough to broil an inhabitant of Bengal; and the odours, exhaling from every quarter, sufficiently powerful to regale the nose of a Hottentot.

Under these agreeable circumstances we entered the great city. The Stadt-huys being the only cool place it contained, I repaired thither as fast as the heat permitted, and walked in a lofty marble hall, magnificently covered, till the dinner was ready at the inn. That despatched, we set off for Utrecht. Both sides of the way are lined with the country-houses and gardens of opulent citizens, as fine as gilt statues and clipped hedges can make them. Their number is quite astonishing: from Amsterdam to Utrecht, full thirty miles, we beheld no other objects than endless avenues and stiff parterres scrawled

and flourished in patterns like the embroidery of an old maid's work-bag. Notwithstanding this formal taste, I could not help admiring the neatness and arrangement of every inclosure, enlivened by a profusion of flowers, and decked with arbours, beneath which a vast number of round unmeaning faces were solacing themselves after the heat of the day. Each lusthuys we passed contained some comfortable party dozing over their pipes, or angling in the muddy fish-ponds below. Scarce an avenue but swarmed with female josses; little squat pug-dogs waddling at their sides, the attributes, I suppose, of these fair divinities.

But let us leave them to loiter thus amiably in their Elysian groves, and arrive at Utrecht; which, as nothing very remarkable claimed my attention, I hastily quitted to visit a Moravian establishment at Siest, in its neighbourhood. The chapel, a large house, late the habitation of Count Zinzendorf, and a range of apartments filled with the holy fraternity, are totally wrapped in dark groves, overgrown with weeds, amongst which some damsels were straggling, under the immediate protection of their pious brethren.

Traversing the woods, we found ourselves in a large court, built round with brick edifices, the grass-plats in a deplorable way, and one ragged goat, their only inhabitant, on a little expiatory scheme, perhaps, for the failings of the fraternity. I left this poor animal to ruminate in solitude, and followed my guide into a series of shops furnished with gew-gaws and trinkets, said to be manufactured by the female part of the society. Much cannot be boasted of their handiworks: I expressed a wish to see some of these industrious fair ones; but, upon receiving no answer, found this was a subject *of which there was no discourse.*

Consoling myself as well as I was able, I put myself under the guidance of another slovenly disciple, who showed me the chapel, and harangued very pathetically upon celestial love. In my way thither, I caught a glimpse of some pretty sempstresses, warbling melodious hymns as they sat needling and thimbling at their windows above. I had a great inclination to have approached this busy group, but the roll of the brother's eye corrected me.

Reflecting upon my unworthiness, I retired from the consecrated buildings, and was driven back to Utrecht, not a little

amused with my expedition. If you are as well disposed to be pleased as I was, I shall esteem myself very lucky, and not repent sending you so incorrect a narrative. I really have not time to look it over, and am growing so drowsy, that you will, I hope, pardon all its errors, when you consider that my pen writes in its sleep.

LETTER VII.

SPA, *July 6th.*

From Utrecht to Bois le Duc nothing but sand and heath; no inspiration, no whispering foliage, not even a grasshopper, to put one in mind of Eclogues and Theocritus. "But why did you not fall into one of your beloved slumbers, and dream of poetic mountains? This was the very country to shut one's eyes upon without disparagement." Why so I did, but the postillions and boatmen obliged me to open them, as soon as they were closed. Four times was I shoved, out of my visions, into leaky boats, and towed across as many idle rivers. I thought there was no end of these tiresome transits; and, when I reached my journey's end, was so completely jaded that I almost believed Charon would be the next aquatic I should have to deal with. The fair light of the morning (Tuesday, July 4th) was scarcely sufficient to raise my spirits, and I had left Bois le Duc a good way in arrears before I was thoroughly convinced of my existence; when I looked through the blinds of the carriage, and saw nothing but barren plains and mournful willows, banks clad with rushes, and heifers so black and dismal that Proserpine herself would have given them up to Hecate. I was near believing myself in the neighbourhood of a certain evil place, where I should be punished for all my croakings. We travelled at this rate, I dare say, fifteen miles, without seeing a single shed: at last, one or two miserable cottages appeared, darkened by heath, and stuck in a sand-pit; from whence issued a half-starved generation, that pursued us a long while with their piteous wailings. The heavy roads and ugly prospects, together with the petulant clamours of my petitioners, made me quite uncharitable. I was in a dark, remorseless mood, which lasted me till we reached Brée, a shabby decayed town, encompassed by walls and ruined

turrets. Having nothing to do, I straggled about them, till night shaded the dreary prospects, and gave me an opportunity of imagining them, if I pleased, noble and majestic. Several of these waning edifices were invested with thick ivy: the evening was chill, and I crept under their covert. Two or three brother owls were before me, but politely gave up their pretensions to the spot, and, as soon as I appeared, with a rueful whoop flitted away to some deeper retirement. I had scarcely begun to mope in tranquillity, before a rapid shower trickled amongst the clusters above me, and forced me to abandon my haunt. Returning in the midst of it to my inn, I hurried to bed, and was soon lulled asleep by the storm. A dream bore me off to Persepolis; and led me thro' vast subterraneous treasures to a hall, where Solomon, methought, was holding forth upon their vanity. I was upon the very point of securing a part of this immense wealth, and fancied myself writing down the sage prophet's advice how to make use of it, when a loud vociferation in the street, and the bell of a neighbouring chapel, dispersed the vision. Starting up, I threw open the windows, and found it was eight o'clock (Wednesday, July 5th), and had hardly rubbed my eyes, before beggars came limping from every quarter. I knew their plaguy voices but too well; and that the same hubbub had broken my slumbers, and driven me from wisdom and riches to the regions of ignorance and poverty. The halt, the lame, and the blind, being restored, by the miracle of a few stivers, to their functions, we breakfasted in peace, and, gaining the carriage, waded through sandy deserts to Maestricht: our view, however, was considerably improved, for a league round the town, and presented some hills and pleasant valleys, smiling with crops of grain: here and there, green meadows, spread over with hay, varied the prospect, which the chirping of birds (the first I had heard for many a tedious day) amongst the barley, rendered so cheerful, that I began, like them, my exultations, and was equally thoughtless and serene. I need scarcely tell you, that, leaving the coach, I pursued a deep furrow between two extensive corn-fields, and reposed upon a bank of flowers, the golden ears waving above my head, and entirely bounding my prospect. Here I lay, in peace and sunshine, a few happy moments; contemplating the blue sky, and fancying myself restored to the valley at F., where I

have passed so many happy hours, shut out from the world, and concealed in the bosom of harvests. It was then I first grew so fond of dreaming; and no wonder, since I have frequently imagined that Ceres did not disdain to inspire my slumbers; but, half concealed, half visible, would tell me amusing stories of her reapers; and, sometimes more seriously inclined, recite the affecting tale of her misfortunes. At mid-day, when all was still, and a warm haze seemed to repose on the face of the landscape, I have often fancied this celestial voice bewailing Proserpine, in the most pathetic accents. From these sacred moments I resolved to offer sacrifice in the fields of Enna; to explore their fragrant recesses, and experience whether the Divinity would not manifest herself to me in her favourite domain. It was this vow, which tempted me from my native valleys. Its execution, therefore, being my principal aim, I deserted my solitary bank and proceeded on my journey. Maestricht abounds in Gothic churches, but contains no temple to Ceres. I was not sorry to quit it, after spending an hour unavoidably within its walls. Our road was conducted up a considerable eminence, from the summit of which we discovered a range of woody steeps, extending for leagues; beneath lay a winding valley, richly variegated and lighted up by the Maese. The evening sun, scarcely gleaming through hazy clouds, cast a pale, tender hue upon the landscape, and the copses, still dewy with a shower that had lately fallen, diffused the most grateful fragrance. Flocks of sheep hung browsing on the acclivities, whilst a numerous herd were dispersed along the river's side. I stayed so long, enjoying this pastoral scene, that we did not arrive at Liège till the night was advanced, and the moon risen. Her interesting gleams were thrown away upon this ill-built, crowded city; and I grieved that gates and fortifications prevented my breathing the fresh air of the surrounding mountains.

Next morning (July 6th) a zigzag road brought us, after many descents and rises, to Spa. The approach, through a rocky vale, is not totally devoid of picturesque merit, and as I met no cabriolets or tituppings on the chaufée, I concluded that the waters were not as yet much visited; and that I should have their romantic environs pretty much to myself. But, alas, how rudely was I deceived! The moment we entered up flew a dozen sashes. Chevaliers de St. Louis,

meagre Marquises, and ladies of the scarlet order of Babylon, all poked their heads out. In a few minutes half the town was in motion; tailors, confectioners, and barbers thrusting bills into our hands with manifold grimaces and contortions. Then succeeded a grand *entré* of *valets de place*, who were hardly dismissed before the lodging letters arrived, followed by somebody with a list of *les seigneurs* and *dames* as long as a Welsh pedigree. Half-an-hour was wasted in speeches and recommendations; another passed before we could snatch a morsel of refreshment; they then finding I was neither inclined to go to the ball, nor enter the land where Pharaoh reigneth, peace was restored, a few feeble bows were scraped, and I found myself in perfect solitude. Taking advantage of this quiet moment, I stole out of town, and followed a path cut in the rocks, which brought me to a young wood of oaks on their summits. Luckily I met no saunterer: the gay vagabonds, it seemed, were all at the assembly, as happy as billiards and chit-chat could make them. It was not an evening to tempt such folks abroad. The air was cool, and the sky lowering; a melancholy cloud shaded the wild hills and irregular woods at a distance. There was something so importunate in their appearance, that I could not help asking their name, and was told they were skirts of the forest of Ardenne, amongst whose enchanted labyrinths the heroes of Boyardo and Ariosto roved formerly in quest of adventures. I felt myself singularly affected whilst gazing upon a wood so celebrated in romance for feats of the highest chivalry; and, Don Quixote-like, would have explored its recesses in search of that memorable fountain of hatred, which (if you recollect the story) was raised by Merlin to free illustrious knights and damsels from the torments of rejected love. So far was I advanced in these romantic fancies, that, forgetting the lateness of the hour, I wandered on, expecting to reach the fountain at every step; but at length it grew so dusky that, unable to trace back my way amongst the thickets, in vain I strayed through intricate copses, till the clouds began to disperse and the moon appeared. Being so placed as to receive the full play of silver radiance, to my no small surprise, I beheld a precipice immediately beneath my feet. The chasm was deep and awful; something like the entrance to a grot discovered itself below, and if I had not already been dis-

THE CANAL, GHENT.

AIX LA CHAPELLE CATHEDRAL.

appointed on the score of the fount, I won't answer but that I should have flung myself adventurously down, and tried whether I might not have seen such wonders as appeared to Bradamante, when cast by Pinnabel, rather impolitely, into Merlin's cave. But no propitious light beaming from the cavity, I concluded times were changed; and searching about me, found at last a shelving steep, which it was just possible to descend without goat's heels, and that's all.

In my way home, I passed the redoute, and seeing a vast glare of lustres in its apartments, I ran upstairs and found the gamblers all eager in storming the Pharaoh Bank: a young Englishman of distinction seemed the most likely to raise the siege, which increased every instant in turbulence; but not feeling the least inclination to protract or to shorten its fate, I left the knights to their adventures, and returned ingloriously to my inn.

All languages are chattering at the Table d'Hôte, and all sorts of business transacted under my very windows. The racket and perfume of this place make me resolve to get out of it to-morrow; as that is the case, you won't hear from me till I reach Munich. Adieu! May we meet in our dreams by the fountain of Merlin, and from thence take our flight with Astolpho to the moon; for I shrewdly suspect the best part of our senses are bottled up there; and then, you know, it will be a delightful novelty to wake up with a clear understanding.

"Indeed, Sir, no Monsieur *comme il faut*, ever left Spa in such dudgeon before, unless jilted by a Polish princess, or stripped by an itinerant Count! You have neither breakfasted at the Vauxhall, nor attended the Spectacle, nor tasted the waters. Had you but taken one sip, your ill-humour would have all trickled away, and you would have felt both your heels and your elbows quite alive in the evening."—Granted; but pray tell your postillions to drive off as fast as their horses will carry them.

Away we went to Aix-la-Chapelle about ten at night, and saw the mouldering turrets of that once illustrious capital by the help of a candle and lantern. An old woman asked our names (for not a single soldier appeared); and traversing a number of superannuated streets without perceiving the least trace of Charlemagne or his Paladins, we procured comfortable

though not magnificent apartments, and slept most unheroically sound, till it was time to set forward for Dusseldorf.

July 8th.—As we were driven out of the town, I caught a glimpse of a grove, hemmed in by dingy buildings, where a few water-drinkers were sauntering along to the sound of some rueful French horns; the wan greenish light admitted through the foliage made them look like unhappy souls condemned to an eternal lounge for having trifled away their existence. It was not with much regret that I left such a party behind; and, after experiencing the vicissitudes of good roads and rumbling pavements, found myself, towards the close of evening, upon the banks of the Rhine.

Many wild ideas thronged into my mind, the moment I beheld this celebrated river. I thought of the vast regions through which it flows, and suffered my imagination to expatiate as far as its source. A red, variegated sky, reflected from the stream, the woods trembling on its banks, and the spires of Nuys rising beyond them, helped to amuse my fancy. Not being able to brook the confinement of the carriage, I left it to come over at its leisure; and, stepping into a boat, rowed along, at first, by the quivering osiers; then, launching out into the midst of the waters, I glided a few moments with the current, and resting on my oars, listened to the hum of voices afar off, while several little skiffs, like canoes, glanced before my sight, concerning which distance and the twilight allowed me to make a thousand fantastic conjectures. When I had sufficiently indulged these extravagant reveries, I began to cross over the river in good earnest; and being landed on its opposite margin, travelled forwards to the town.

Nothing but the famous gallery of paintings could invite strangers to stay a moment within its walls; more crooked streets, more indifferent houses, one seldom meets with; except soldiers, not a living creature moving about them; and at night a complete regiment of bugs "marked me for their own." Thus I lay, at once both the seat of war and the victim of these detestable animals, till early in the morning (Sunday, July 9th), when Morpheus, compassionating my sufferings, opened the ivory gates of his empire, and freed his votary from the most unconscionable vermin that ever nastiness engendered. In humble prose, I fell fast asleep; and remained quiet, in defiance of my adversaries, till it was time to survey the cabinet.

This collection is displayed in five large galleries, and contains some valuable productions of the Italian school; but the room most boasted of is that which Rubens has filled with no less than three enormous representations of the last day, where an innumerable host of sinners are exhibited as striving in vain to avoid the tangles of the devil's tail. The woes of several fat luxurious souls are rendered in the highest gusto. Satan's dispute with some brawny concubines, whom he is lugging off in spite of all their resistance, cannot be too much admired by those who approve this class of subject, and think such strange imbroglios in the least calculated to raise a sublime or a religious idea.

For my own part, I turned from them with disgust, and hastened to contemplate a Holy Family by Camillo Procaccini, in another apartment. The brightest imagination can never conceive any figure more graceful than that of the young Jesus; and if ever I beheld an inspired countenance or celestial features, it was here: but to attempt conveying in words what colours alone can express, would be only reversing the absurdity of many a master in the gallery, who aims to represent those ideas by colours which language alone is able to describe. Should you admit this opinion, you won't be surprised at my passing such a multitude of renowned pictures unnoticed; nor at my bringing you out of the cabinet without deluging ten pages with criticisms in the style of the ingenious Lady M——.

As I had spent so much time in gazing at Camillo's divinity, the day was too far advanced to think of travelling to Cologne; I was therefore obliged to put myself once more under the dominion of the most inveterate bugs in the universe. This government, like many others, made but an indifferent use of its power, and the subject suffering accordingly was extremely rejoiced at flying from his persecutors to Cologne.

July 10*th.*—Clouds of dust hindered my making any remarks on the exterior of this celebrated city; but if its appearance be not more beautiful from without than within, I defy Mr. Salmon himself to launch forth very warmly in its praise. But of what avail are stately palaces, broad streets, or airy markets, to a town which can boast of such a treasure as the bodies of those three wise sovereigns who were star-led to Bethlehem? Is not this circumstance enough to procure it

every respect? I really believe so, from the pious and dignified contentment of its inhabitants. They care not a hair of an ass's ear whether their houses be gloomy and ill-contrived, their pavements overgrown with weeds, and their shops with filthiness, provided the carcasses of Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar might be preserved with proper decorum. Nothing, to be sure, can be richer than the shrine which contains these precious relics. I paid my devotions before it the moment I arrived; this step was inevitable: had I omitted it, not a soul in Cologne but would have cursed me for a Pagan.

Do you not wonder at hearing of these venerable bodies so far from their native country? I thought them snug in some Arabian pyramid ten feet deep in spice; but you see one can never tell what is to become of one a few ages hence. Who knows but the Emperor of Morocco may be canonized some future day in Lapland? I asked, of course, how in the name of miracles they came hither; but found no story of a supernatural conveyance. It seems the holy Empress Helena, as great a collectress of relics as the D——s of P. is of profane curiosities, first routed them out: then they were packed off to Rome. King Alaric, having no grace, bundled them down to Milan; where they remained till it pleased God to inspire an ancient archbishop with the fervent wish of depositing them at Cologne. There these skeletons were taken into the most especial consideration, crowned with jewels and filigreed with gold. Never were skulls more elegantly mounted; and I doubt whether Odin's buffet could exhibit so fine an assortment. The chapel containing these beatified bones is placed in a dark extremity of the cathedral. Several golden lamps gleam along the polished marbles with which it is adorned, and afford just light enough to read the following monkish inscription:—

"CORPORA SANCTORUM RECUBANT HIC TERNA MAGORUM:
EX HIS SUBLATUM NIHIL EST ALIBIVE LOCATUM."

After I had satisfied my curiosity with respect to the peregrinations of the consecrated skeletons, I examined their shrine; and was rather surprised to find it not only enriched with barbaric gold and pearl, but covered with cameos and intaglios of the best antique sculpture. Many an impious emperor and gross Silenus, many a wanton nymph and frantic

bacchanal, figure in the same range with the statues of saints and evangelists. How St. Helena could tolerate such a mixed assembly (for the shrine was formed under her auspices) surpasses my comprehension. Perhaps you will say it is no great matter, and give me a hint to move out of the chapel, lest the three kings and their star should lead me quite out of my way. Very well; I think I had better stop in time, to tell you, without further excursion, that we set off after dinner for Bonn.

Our road-side was lined with beggarly children, high convent walls, and scarecrow crucifixes, lubberly monks, dejected peasants, and all the delights of Catholicism. Such scenery not engaging a share of my attention, I kept gazing at the azure irregular mountains which bounded our view, and in thought was already transported to their summits. Various are the prospects I surveyed from this imaginary exaltation, and innumerable the chimeras which trotted in my brain. Mounted on these fantastic quadrupeds, I shot swiftly from rock to rock, and built castles in the style of Piranesi upon most of their pinnacles. The magnificence and variety of my aërial towers hindered my thinking the way long. I was still walking with a crowd of phantoms upon their terraces, when the carriage made a halt. Immediately descending the innumerable flights of steps which divide such lofty edifices from the lower world, I entered the inn at Bonn, and was shown into an apartment which commands the chief front of the Elector's palace. You may guess how contemptible it appeared to one just returned from the court of fancy.

In other respects, I saw it in a very favourable moment; for the twilight, shading the whole façade, concealed its plaistered walls and painted pillars; their pediments and capitals being tolerably well proportioned, and the range of windows beneath considerable, I gave the architect more credit than he deserved, and paced to and fro beneath the arcade, as pompously as if arrived at the Vatican; but the circumstance which rendered my walk in reality agreeable, was the prevalence of a delicious perfume. It was so dusky, that I was a minute or two seeking in vain the entrance of an orangery, from whence this reviving scent proceeded. At length I discovered it; and, passing under an arch, found myself in the midst of lemon and orange trees, now in the fullest blow, which form a continued grove

before the palace, and extend, on each side of its grand portal, out of sight. A few steps separate this extensive terrace from a lawn, bordered by stately rows of beeches. Beyond, in the centre of this striking theatre, rises a romantic assemblage of distant mountains, crowned with the ruins of castles, whose turrets, but faintly seen, were just such as you have created to complete a prospect. I was the only human being in the misty extent of the gardens, and was happier in my solitude than I can describe. No noise disturbed its silence, except the flutter of moths and trickling of fountains. These undecided sounds, corresponding with the dimness and haze of the scenery, threw me into a pensive state of mind, neither gay nor dismal. I recapitulated the wayward adventures of my childhood, and traced back each moment of a period, which had seen me happy. Then, turning my thoughts towards future days, my heart beat at the idea of that awful veil which covers the time to come. One moment, 'twas the brightest hope that glittered behind it; the next, a series of melancholy images clouded the perspective. Thus, alternately swayed by fears and exultation, I passed an interesting hour in the twilight, ranging amongst the orange trees, or reclined by the fountain. I could not boast of being perfectly satisfied, since those were absent, without whom not even the fields of Enna could be charming. However, I was far from displeased with the clear streams that bubbled around, and could willingly have dropped asleep by their margin. Had I reposed in so romantic a situation, the murmurs of trees and waters would doubtless have invited "some strange mysterious dream" to hover over me, and perhaps futurity might have been unveiled.

LETTER VIII.

July 11*th.*—Let those who delight in picturesque country repair to the borders of the Rhine, and follow the road which we took from Bonn to Coblentz. In some places it is suspended like a cornice above the waters; in others, it winds behind lofty steeps and broken acclivities, shaded by woods and clothed with an endless variety of plants and flowers. Several green paths lead amongst this vegetation to the summits of the rocks, which often serve as the foundation of

abbeys and castles, whose lofty roofs and spires, rising above the cliffs, impress passengers with ideas of their grandeur, that might probably vanish upon a nearer approach. Not choosing to lose any prejudice in their favour, I kept a respectful distance whenever I left my carriage, and walked on the banks of the river.

Just before we came to Andernach, an antiquated town with strange morisco-looking towers, I spied a raft, at least three hundred feet in length, on which ten or twelve cottages were erected, and a great many people employed in sawing wood. The women sat spinning at their doors, whilst their children played among the water-lilies that bloomed in abundance on the edge of the stream. A smoke, rising from one of these aquatic habitations, partially obscured the mountains beyond, and added not a little to their effect.

Altogether, the scene was so novel and amusing, that I sat half an hour contemplating it from an eminence under the shade of some leafy walnuts; and should like extremely to build a moveable village, people it with my friends, and so go floating about from island to island, and from one woody coast of the Rhine to another. Would you dislike such a party? I am much deceived, or you would be the first to explore the shades and promontories beneath which we should be wafted along.

But I don't think you would find Coblentz, where we were obliged to take up our night's lodging, much to your taste. 'Tis a mean, dirty assemblage of plastered houses, striped with paint, and set off with wooden galleries, in the beautiful taste of St. Giles's. Above, on a rock, stands the palace of the Elector, which seems to be remarkable for nothing but situation. I did not bestow many looks on this structure whilst ascending the mountain across which our road to Mayence conducted us.

July 12th.—Having attained the summit, we discovered a vast, irregular range of country, and advancing, found ourselves amongst downs bounded by forests and purpled with thyme. This sort of prospect extending for several leagues, I walked on the turf, and inhaled with avidity the fresh gales that blew over its herbage, till I came to a steep slope overgrown with privet and a variety of luxuriant shrubs in blossom; there reposing beneath its shade, I gathered flowers, listened to

the bees, observed their industry, and idled away a few minutes with great fascination. A cloudless sky and bright sunshine made me rather loth to move on; but the charms of the landscape, increasing every instant, drew me forward.

I had not gone far, before a winding valley discovered itself, shut in by rocks and mountains clothed to their very summits with the thickest woods. A broad river, flowing at the base of the cliffs, reflected the impending vegetation, and looked so calm and glassy that I was determined to be better acquainted with it. For this purpose we descended by a zigzag path into the vale, and making the best of our way on the banks of the Lune (for so is the river called), came suddenly upon the town of Ems, famous in mineral story; where finding very good lodgings, we took up our abode, and led an Indian life amongst the wilds and mountains.

After supper I walked on a smooth lawn by the river, to observe the moon journeying through a world of silver clouds that lay dispersed over the face of the heavens. It was a mild genial evening; every mountain cast its broad shadow on the surface of the stream; lights twinkled afar off on the hills; they burnt in silence. All were asleep, except a female figure in white, with glow-worms shining in her hair. She kept moving disconsolately about; sometimes I heard her sigh; and if apparitions sigh, this must have been an apparition. Upon my return, I asked a thousand questions, but could never obtain any information of the figure and its luminaries.

July 13th.—The pure air of the morning invited me early to the hills. Hiring a skiff, I rowed about a mile down the stream, and landed on a sloping meadow, level with the waters, and newly mown. Heaps of hay still lay dispersed under the copses which hemmed in on every side this little sequestered paradise. What a spot for a tent! I could encamp here for months, and never be tired. Not a day would pass by without discovering some new promontory, some untrodden pasture, some unsuspected vale, where I might remain among woods and precipices lost and forgotten. I would give you, and two or three more, the clue of my labyrinth: nobody else should be conscious of its entrance. Full of such agreeable dreams, I rambled about the meads, scarcely knowing which way I was going; sometimes a spangled fly led me astray, and, oftener, my own strange fancies. Between both, I was

perfectly bewildered, and should never have found my boat again, had not an old German naturalist, who was collecting fossils on the cliffs, directed me to it.

When I got home it was growing late, and I now began to perceive that I had taken no refreshment, except the perfume of the hay and a few wood strawberries; airy diet, you will observe, for one not yet received into the realms of Ginnistan.*

July 14th.—I have just made a discovery, that this place is as full of idlers and water-drinkers as their Highnesses of Orange and Hesse Darmstadt can desire; for to them accrue all the profits of its salubrious fountains. I protest, I knew nothing of all this yesterday, so entirely was I taken up with the rocks and meadows; no chance of meeting either card or billiard players in their solitudes. Both abound at Ems, where they hop and fidget from ball to ball, unconscious of the bold scenery in their neighbourhood, and totally insensible to its charms. They had no notion, not they, of admiring barren crags and precipices, where even the Lord would lose his way, as a coarse lubber decorated with stars and orders very ingeniously observed to me; nor could they form the least conception of any pleasure there was in climbing like a goat amongst the cliffs, and then diving into woods and recesses where the sun had never penetrated; where there were neither card-tables prepared nor sideboards garnished; no *jambon de Mayence* in waiting; no supply of pipes, nor any of the commonest delights, to be met with in the commonest taverns.

To all this I acquiesced with most perfect submission, but immediately left the orator to entertain a circle of antiquated dames and weather-beaten officers who were gathering around him. Scarcely had I turned my back upon this polite assembly, when *Monsieur l'Administrateur des bains*, a fine pompous fellow, who had been *maitre d'hôtel* in a great German family, came forward purposely to acquaint me, I suppose, that their baths had the honour of possessing Prince Orloff, "*avec sa grande maitresse, son Chamberlain et quelques Dames d'Honneur:*" moreover, that his Highness came hither to refresh himself after his laborious employments at the Court of

* The Peries, inhabitants of Ginnistan, live upon perfumes, etc., etc. See Richardson's Dissertations.

Petersburg, and expected (*grace aux eaux!*) to return to the domains his august sovereign had lately bestowed upon him in perfect health, and to become the father of his people.

Wishing Monsieur d'Orloff all possible success, I should have left the company at a great distance, had not a violent shower stopped my career, and obliged me to return to my apartment. The rain growing heavier, intercepted the prospect of the mountains, and spread such a gloom over the vale as sank my spirits fifty degrees; to which a close foggy atmosphere not a little contributed. Towards night the clouds assumed a more formidable aspect. Thunder rolled awfully along the distant cliffs, and several rapid torrents began to run down the steeps. Unable to stay within, I walked into an open portico, listening to the murmur of the river, mingled with the roar of falling waters. At intervals a blue flash of lightning discovered their agitated surface, and two or three scared women rushing through the storm and calling all the saints in Paradise to their assistance.

Things were in this state, when the orator who had harangued so brilliantly on the nothingness of ascending mountains, took shelter under the porch, and entering immediately into conversation, regaled my ears with a woful narration of murders which had happened the other day on the precise road I was to follow next morning.

"Sir," said he, "your route is, to be sure, very perilous: on the left you have a chasm, down which, should your horses take the smallest alarm, you are infallibly precipitated; to the right hangs an impervious wood, and there, sir, I can assure you, are wolves enough to devour a regiment; a little farther on, you cross a desolate tract of forest land, the roads so deep and broken, that if you go ten paces in as many minutes you may think yourself fortunate. There lurk the most savage banditti in Europe, lately irritated by the Prince of Orange's proscription; and so desperate, that if they once attack, you can expect no mercy. Should you venture through this hazardous district to-morrow, you will, in all probability, meet a company of people who have just left the town to search for the mangled bodies of their relations; but, for Heaven's sake, sir, if you value your life, do not suffer an idle curiosity to lead you over such dangerous regions, however picturesque their appearance."

I own I felt rather intimidated by so formidable a prospect, and was very near abandoning my plan of crossing the mountains, and so go back again and round about, the Lord knows where; but considering this step would be quite unheroical, I resolved to attribute my fears to the gloom of the moment, and the dejection it occasioned. It was almost nine o'clock before my kind adviser ceased inspiring me with terrors; then, finding myself at liberty, I retired to bed, not under the most agreeable impressions; and after tossing and tumbling in the agitation of tumultuous slumbers, I started up at seven in the morning of July 15th, ordered the horses, and set forward, without further dilemmas. Though it had thundered almost the whole night, the air was still clogged with vapours, the mountains bathed in humid clouds, and the scene I had so warmly admired no longer discernible. Proceeding along the edge of the precipices I had been forewarned of, for about an hour, and escaping that peril at least, we traversed the slopes of a rude, heathy hill, in instantaneous expectation of foes and murderers. A misty rain prevented us seeing above ten yards before us, and every uncouth oak or rocky fragment we approached seemed lurking spies or gigantic enemies. One time the murmur of the wind among invisible woods of beech, sounded like the wail of distress; and at another the noise of a torrent we could not discover, counterfeited the report of musquetry. In this suspicious manner we journeyed through the forest which had so recently been the scene of assaults and depredations. At length, after winding several restless hours amongst its dreary avenues, we emerged into open daylight. The sky cleared, a cultivated vale lay before us, and the evening sun, gleaming bright through the vapours, cast a cheerful look upon some corn-fields, and seemed to promise better times. A few minutes more brought us safe to the village of Viesbaden, where we slept in peace and tranquillity.

July 16th.—Our apprehensions entirely dispersed, we rose light and refreshed from our slumbers, and passing through Mayence, Oppenheim, and Worms, travelled gaily over the plain in which Mannheim is situated. The sun set before we arrived there, and it was by the mild gleams of the rising moon, that I first beheld the vast electoral palace, and those long straight streets and neat white houses, which distinguish this elegant capital from almost every other.

Numbers of well-dressed people were amusing themselves with music and fireworks in the squares and open spaces; other groups appeared conversing in circles before their doors, and enjoying the serenity of the evening. Almost every window bloomed with carnations; and we could hardly cross a street without hearing the German flute. A scene of such happiness and refinement contrasted in the most agreeable manner with the dismal prospects we had left behind. No storms, no frightful chasms, were here to alarm us, no ruffians or lawless plunderers. All around was peace, security, and contentment in their most engaging attire.

July 17th.—Though all impatience to reach that delightful classic region which already possesses, as I have often said, the better half of my spirit, I could not think of leaving Mannheim unexplored; and therefore resolved to give up the day to the halls and galleries of the electoral palace. Those, which contain the cabinet of paintings and sculptures in ivory, form a regular suite of nine immense apartments, about three hundred and seventy-two feet in length, well-proportioned and uniformly floored with inlaid wood. Each room has ample folding-doors richly gilt and varnished. When seen in perspective these entrances have the most magnificent effect imaginable. Nothing can give nobler ideas of space than such an enfilade of saloons unencumbered by heavy furniture, where the eyes range without interruption: I wandered alone from one to the other, and was never wearied with contemplating the variety of pictures which enliven the scene, and convey the highest idea of the collector's taste. When my curiosity was a little satisfied, I left this amusing series of apartments with regret, visited the library which the present Elector Palatine has formed, upon the same great scale that characterizes his other collections, and, after viewing the rest of the palace, saw the opera house, which may boast of having contained one of the first bands in Europe: from thence I returned home in a very musical humour.

An excellent harpsichord seconded this disposition, which lasted me till late in the evening; when growing drowsy, I yielded to the influence of sleep, and was in an instant transported to a far more delightful palace than that of the elector; where I expatiated in perfumed apartments with yellow light, and conversed with none but Albano and Claude Lorrain, till the

beams of the morning sun entered my chamber, and forced my visiting companions to fly murmuring to the shades. I cannot say but I was sorry to leave Mannheim, though my acquaintance with it was entirely confined to inanimate objects. The cheerful air and free range of the galleries would be sufficient, for several days, for my amusement; as you know I could people them with phantoms. Not many leagues out of town, lie the famous gardens of Schweidsing. The weather being extremely warm, we were glad to avail ourselves of their shades. There are a great many fountains inclosed by thickets of shrubs, and cool alleys which lead to arbours of trellis-work, festooned with nasturtiums and convolvuluses. Several catalpas and sumachs in full flower gave considerable richness to the scenery; and whilst we walked amongst them, a fresh breeze gently waved their summits. The tall poplars and acacias, quivering with the air, cast innumerable shadows on the intervening plats of greensward, and, as they moved their branches, discovered other walks beyond, and distant jets of water rising above their foliage, and sparkling in the sun. After passing a multitude of shady avenues, terminated by temples or groups of statues, we followed our guide through a kind of arched bower to a little opening in the wood, neatly paved with different coloured pebbles. On one side, appeared niches and alcoves, ornamented with spars and polished marbles; on the other, an aviary; in front, a superb pavilion, with baths, porticos, and cabinets, fitted up in the most elegant and luxurious style. The song of exotic birds; the freshness of the surrounding verdure heightened by falling streams; and that dubious poetic light admitted through thick foliage, so agreeable after the glare of a sultry day, detained me for some time in an alcove reading Spenser, and imagining myself but a few paces removed from the Idle Lake. I would fain have loitered an hour more in this enchanted bower, had not the gardener, whose patience was quite exhausted, and who had never heard of the Red-Cross Knight and his achievements, dragged me away to a sunburnt, contemptible hillock, commanding the view of a serpentine ditch, and decorated with the title of Jardin Anglois. Some object like decayed lime-kilns and mouldering ovens, is disposed in an amphitheatrical form, on the declivity of this tremendous eminence: and there is to be ivy, and a cascade, and what not, as my conductor

observed. A glance was all I bestowed on this caricature upon English gardens; I then went off in a huff at being chased from my bower, and grumbled all the road to Entsweigen; where, to our misfortune, we lay amidst hogs and vermin, who amply revenged my quarrels with their country.'

July 20th.—After travelling a post or two, we came in sight of a green moor, with many insulated woods and villages; the Danube sweeping majestically along, and the city of Ulm rising upon its banks. The fields in its neighbourhood were overspread with cloths bleaching in the sun, and waiting for barks which convey them down the great river, in ten days, to Vienna, and from thence through Hungary, into the midst of the Turkish Empire. I almost envied the merchants their voyage, and descending to the edge of the stream, proffered my orisons to Father Danube, beseeching him to remember me to the regions through which he flows. I promised him an altar and solemn rites, should he grant my request, and was very idolatrous, until the shadows lengthening over the unlimited plains on his margin, reminded me that the sun would be shortly sunk, and that I had still above fifteen miles to go. Gathering a purple iris that grew upon the bank, I wore it to his honour; and have reason to fancy my piety was rewarded, as not a fly or an insect dared to buzz about me the whole evening.

You never saw a brighter sky nor more glowing clouds than gilded our horizon. The air was impregnated with the perfume of clover, and for ten miles we beheld no other objects than smooth levels enamelled with flowers, and interspersed with thickets of oak, beyond which appeared a long series of mountains, that distance and the evening tinged with an interesting azure. Such were the very spots for youthful games and exercises, open spaces for tilts, and spreading shades to screen the spectators.

Father Lafiteau tells us, there are many such vast and flowery meads in the interior of America, to which the roving tribes of Indians repair once or twice in a century to settle the rights of the chase, and lead their solemn dances; and so deep an impression do these assemblies leave on the minds of the savages, that the highest ideas they entertain of future felicity consist in the perpetual enjoyment of songs and dances upon the green boundless lawns of their elysium. In the midst of these visionary plains rises the abode of Aneantsic, encircled by choirs of departed chieftains leaping in cadence to the

mournful sound of spears as they ring on the shell of the tortoise. Their favourite attendants, long separated from them whilst on earth, are restored again in this ethereal region, and skim freely over the vast level space; now hailing one group of beloved friends, and now another. Mortals newly ushered by death into this world of pure blue sky and boundless meads, see the long-lost objects of their affection advancing across the lawn to meet them. Flights of familiar birds, the purveyors of many an earthly chase, once more attend their progress, whilst the shades of their faithful dogs seem coursing each other below. Low murmurs and tinkling sounds fill the whole region, and, as its new denizens proceed, increase in melody, till, unable to resist the thrilling music, they spring forward in ecstasies to join the eternal round.

A share of this celestial transport seemed communicated to me whilst my eyes wandered over the plain, which appeared to widen and extend in proportion as the twilight prevailed.

The dusky hour, favourable to conjurations, allowed me to believe the spirits of departed friends not far removed from the clouds, which, to all appearance, reposed at the extremity of the prospect, and tinted the surface of the horizon with ruddy colours. This glow still lingered upon the verge of the landscape, after the sun disappeared; and 'twas in those peaceful moments, when no sound but the browsing of cattle reached me, that I imagined benign looks were cast upon me from the golden vapours, and I seemed to catch glimpses of faint forms moving amongst them, which were once so dear; and even thought my ears affected by well-known voices, long silent upon earth. When the warm hues of the sky were gradually fading, and the distant thickets began to assume a deeper and more melancholy blue, I fancied a shape like Thisbe* shot swiftly along; and, sometimes halting afar off, cast an affectionate look upon her old master, that seemed to say, When you draw near the last inevitable hour, and the pale countries of Aneantsic are stretched out before you, I will precede your footsteps, and guide them safe through the wild labyrinths which separate this world from yours. I was so possessed with the ideas and so full of the remembrance of that poor, affectionate creature, whose miserable end you were

* Thisbe, a favourite greyhound torn to pieces by a mad dog.

the witness of, that I did not, for several minutes, perceive our arrival at Guntsberg. Hurrying to bed, I seemed in my slumbers to pass that interdicted boundary which divides our earth from the region of Indian happiness. Thisbe ran nimbly before me; her white form glimmered amongst dusky forests; she led me into an infinitely spacious plain, where I heard vast multitudes discoursing upon events to come. What further passed must never be revealed. I awoke in tears, and could hardly find spirits enough to look around me, till we were driving through the midst of Augsburg.

July 21st.—We dined and rambled about this renowned city till evening. The colossal paintings on the walls of almost every considerable building gave it a strange air, which pleases upon the score of novelty.

Having passed a number of streets decorated in this exotic manner, we found ourselves suddenly before the public hall, by a noble statue of Augustus, under whose auspices the colony was formed. Which way soever we turned, our eyes met some remarkable edifice, or marble basin into which several groups of sculptured river-gods pour a profusion of waters. These stately fountains and bronze statues, the extraordinary size and loftiness of the buildings, the towers rising in perspective, and the Doric portal of the town-house, answered in some measure the idea Montfaucon gives us of the scene of an ancient tragedy. Whenever a pompous Flemish painter attempts a representation of Troy, and displays in his background those streets of palaces described in the Iliad, Augsburg, or some such city, may easily be traced. Sometimes a corner of Antwerp discovers itself; and generally, above a Corinthian portico, rises a Gothic spire. Just such a jumble may be viewed from the statue of Augustus, under which I remained till the Concierge came, who was to open the gates of the town-house, and show me its magnificent hall.

I wished for you exceedingly when, ascending a flight of a hundred steps, I entered it through a portal, supported by tall pillars and crowned with a majestic pediment. Upon advancing, I discovered five more entrances equally grand, with golden figures of guardian genii leaning over the entablature; and saw, through a range of windows, each above thirty feet high, and nearly level with the marble pavement, the whole city, with all its roofs and spires, beneath my feet. The pillars,

cornices, and panels of this striking apartment are uniformly tinged with brown and gold; and the ceiling, enriched with emblematical paintings and innumerable canopies of carved work, casts a very magisterial shade. Upon the whole, I should not be surprised at a burgomaster assuming a formidable dignity in such a room.

I must confess it had a somewhat similar effect upon me; and I descended the flight of steps with as much pomposity as if a triumphal car waited at my feet, or as if on the point of giving audience to the Queen of Sheba. It happened to be a Saint's day, and half the inhabitants of Augsburg were gathered together in the opening before their hall; the greatest numbers, especially the women, still exhibiting the very identical dresses which Hollar engraved. My lofty gait imposed upon this primitive assembly, which receded to give me passage with as much silent respect as if I had really been the wise sovereign of Israel. When I got home, an execrable supper was served up to my majesty; I scolded in an unroyal style, and soon convinced myself I was no longer Solomon.

July 22nd.—Joy to the Electors of Bavaria! for planting such extensive woods of fir in their dominions as shade over the chief part of the road from Augsburg to Munich. Near the last-mentioned city, I cannot boast of the scenery changing to advantage. Instead of flourishing woods and verdure, we beheld a parched dreary flat, diversified by fields of withering barley, and stunted avenues drawn formally across them; now and then a stagnant pool, and sometimes a dunghill, by way of regale. However, the wild rocks of the Tyrol terminate the view, and to them imagination may fly, and walk amidst springs and lilies of her own creation. I speak from authority, having had the pleasure of anticipating an evening in this romantic style.

Tuesday next is the grand fair, with horse-races and junketings: a piece of news I was but too soon acquainted with; for the moment we entered the town, good-natured creatures from all quarters advised us to get out of it; since traders and harlequins had filled every corner of the place, and there was not a lodging to be procured. The inns, to be sure, were like hives of industrious animals sorting their merchandise, and preparing their goods for sale. Yet, in spite of difficulties, we got possession of a quiet apartment.

July 23rd.—We were driven in the evening to Nymphenburg, the Elector's country palace, whose bosquets, jets-d'eaux, and parterres are the pride of the Bavarians. The principal platform is all of a glitter with gilded Cupids and shining serpents spouting at every pore. Beds of poppies, hollyhocks, scarlet lychnis, and the most flaming flowers, border the edge of the walks, which extend till the perspective meets, and swarm with ladies and gentlemen in parti-coloured raiment. The Queen of Golconda's gardens in a French opera are scarcely more gaudy and artificial. Unluckily, too, the evening was fine, and the sun so powerful that we were half roasted before we could cross the great avenue and enter the thickets, which barely conceal a very splendid hermitage, where we joined Mr. and Mrs. T., and a party of fashionable Bavarians.

Amongst the ladies was Madame la Contesse, I forget who, a production of the venerable Haslang, with her daughter, Madame de ——, who has the honour of leading the Elector in her chains. These goddesses stepping into a car, vulgarly called a cariole, the mortals followed, and explored alley after alley and pavilion after pavilion. Then, having viewed Pagodenburg, which is, as they told me, all Chinese; and Marienburg, which is most assuredly all tinsel; we paraded by a variety of fountains in full squirt, and though they certainly did their best (for many were set a-going on purpose), I cannot say I greatly admired them.

The ladies were very gaily attired, and the gentlemen, as smart as swords, bags, and pretty clothes could make them, looked exactly like the fine people one sees represented in a coloured print. Thus we kept walking genteelly about the orangery, till the carriage drew up and conveyed us to Mr. T's.

Immediately after supper, we drove once more out of town, to a garden and tea-room, where all degrees and ages dance jovially together till morning. Whilst one party wheel briskly away in the valz, another amuse themselves in a corner with cold meat and rhenish. That despatched, out they whisk amongst the dancers, with an impetuosity and liveliness I little expected to have found in Bavaria. After turning round and round, with a rapidity that is quite inconceivable to an English dancer, the music changes to a slower movement, and then follows a succession of zig-zag minuets, performed by old

and young, straight and crooked, noble and plebeian, all at once, from one end of the room to the other. Tallow candles snuffing and stinking, dishes changing, heads scratching, and all sorts of performances going forward at the same moment; the flutes, oboes, and bassoons snorting and grunting with peculiar emphasis; now fast, now slow, just as Variety commands, who seems to rule the ceremonial of this motley assembly, where every distinction of rank and privilege is totally forgotten. Once a week, on Sundays that is to say, the rooms are open, and Monday is generally somewhat advanced before they are deserted. If good humour and coarse merriment are all that people desire, here they are to be found in perfection, though at the expense of toes and noses. Both these extremities of my person suffered most cruelly; and I was not sorry to retire about one in the morning to a purer atmosphere.

July 24th.—Custom condemned us to visit the palace, which glares with looking-glass, gilding, and cut velvet, most sumptuously fringed and spangled. The chapel, though small, is richer than anything Crœsus ever possessed, let them say what they will. Not a corner but shines with gold, diamonds, and scraps of martyrdom studded with jewels. I had the delight of treading amethysts and the richest gems under foot, which, if you recollect, Apuleius thinks such supreme felicity. Alas! I was quite unworthy of the honour, and had much rather have trodden the turf of the mountains. Mammon would never have taken his eyes off the pavement; mine soon left the contemplation of it, and fixed on St. Peter's thumb, enshrined with a degree of elegance, and adorned by some malapert enthusiast with several of the most delicate antique cameos I ever beheld; the subjects, Ledas and sleeping Venuses, are a little too pagan, one should think, for an apostle's finger.

From this precious repository we were conducted through the public garden to a large hall, where part of the Sleitzom collection is piled up, till a gallery can be finished for its reception. 'Twas a matter of great favour to view, in this state, the pieces that compose it,—a very imperfect one too, since some of the best were under operation. But I would not upon any account have missed the sight of Rubens's "Massacre of the Innocents." Such expressive horrors were never yet

transferred to canvas, and Moloch himself might have gazed at them with pleasure.

After dinner we were led round the churches; and if you are as much tired with reading my voluminous descriptions, as I was with the continual repetition of altars and reliquaries, the Lord have mercy upon you! However, your delivery draws near. The post is going out, and to-morrow we shall begin to mount the cliffs of the Tyrol; but don't be afraid of any long-winded epistles from their summits: I shall be too well employed in ascending them. Just now, as I have lain by a long while, I grow sleek, and scribble on in mere wantonness of spirit. What excesses such a correspondence is capable of, you will soon be able to judge.

July 25th.—The noise of the people thronging to the fair did not allow me to slumber very long in the morning. When I got up, every street was crowded with Jews and mountebanks, holding forth and driving their bargains in all the energetic vehemence of the German tongue. Vast quantities of rich merchandise glittered in the shops as we passed along to the gates. Heaps of fruit and sweetmeats set half the grandams and infants in the place a-cackling with felicity.

Mighty glad was I to make my escape; and in about an hour or two, we entered a wild tract of country, not unlike the skirts of a princely park. A little farther on stands a cluster of cottages, where we stopped to give our horses some bread, and were pestered with swarms of flies, most probably journeying to Munich fair, there to feast upon sugared tarts and bottle-noses.

The next post brought us over hill and dale, grove and meadow, to a narrow plain, watered by rivulets and surrounded by cliffs, under which lies scattered the village of Wollrathshausen, consisting of several cottages, built entirely of fir, with strange galleries hanging over the way. Nothing can be neater than the carpentry of these simple edifices, nor more solid than their construction; many of them looked as if they had braved the torrents which fell from the mountains a century ago; and, if one may judge from the hoary appearance of the inhabitants, here are patriarchs who remember the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria. Orchards of cherry-trees impend from the steeps above the village, which to our certain knowledge produce no contemptible fruit.

Having refreshed ourselves with their cooling juice, we struck into a grove of pines, the tallest and most flourishing perhaps we ever beheld. There seemed no end to these forests, save where little irregular spots of herbage, fed by cattle, intervened. Whenever we gained an eminence it was only to discover more ranges of dark wood, variegated with meadows and glittering streams. White clover and a profusion of sweet-scented flowers clothe their banks; above, waves the mountain-ash, glowing with scarlet berries; and beyond, rise hills and rocks and mountains, piled upon one another, and fringed with fir to their topmost acclivities. Perhaps the Norwegian forests alone equal these in grandeur and extent. Those which cover the Swiss highlands rarely convey such vast ideas. There, the woods climb only half way up their ascents, and then are circumscribed by snows: here, no boundaries are set to their progress, and the mountains, from their bases to their summits, display rich unbroken masses of vegetation.

As we were surveying this prospect, a thick cloud, fraught with thunder, obscured the transparence of the horizon, whilst flashes startled our horses, whose snorts and stampings resounded through the woods. What from the shade of the firs and the impending tempests, we travelled several miles almost in total darkness. One moment the clouds began to fleet, and a faint gleam promised serener hours, but the next all was gloom and terror; presently a deluge of rain poured down upon the valley, and in a short time the torrents, beginning to swell, raged with such fury as to be with difficulty forded. Twilight drew on, just as we had passed the most terrible; then ascending a steep hill under a mountain, whose pines and birches rustled with the storm, we saw a little lake below. A deep azure haze veiled its eastern shore, and lowering vapours concealed the cliffs to the south; but over its western extremities a few transparent clouds, the remains of the rays of a struggling sunset, were suspended, which streamed on the surface of the waters, and tinged with tender pink the brow of a verdant promontory.

I could not help fixing myself on the banks of the lake for several minutes, till this apparition was lost, and confounded with the shades of night. Looking round, I shuddered at a craggy mountain, clothed in dark forests and almost perpen-

dicular, that was absolutely to be surmounted before we could arrive at Wallersee. No house, not even a shed appearing, we were forced to ascend the peak, and penetrate these awful groves.

Great praise is due to the directors of the roads across them, which, considering their situation, are wonderfully fine. Mounds of stone support the passage in some places; and, in others, it is hewn with incredible labour through the solid rock. Beeches and pines of a hundred feet high, darken the way with their gigantic branches, casting a chill around, and diffusing a woody odour. As we advanced, in the thick shade, amidst the spray of torrents, and heard their loud roar in the chasm beneath, I could scarcely help thinking myself transported to the Grande Chartreuse; and began to conceive hopes of once more beholding St. Bruno.* But, though that venerable father did not vouchsafe an apparition, or call to me again from the depths of the dells, he protected his votary from nightly perils, and brought us to the banks of Wallersee Lake. We saw lights gleam upon its shores, which directed us to a cottage where we reposed after our toils, and were soon lulled to sleep by the fall of distant waters.

July 26th.—The sun rose many hours before me, and when I got up was spangling the surface of the lake, which expands between steeps of wood, crowned by lofty crags and pinnacles. We had an opportunity of contemplating this bold assemblage as we travelled on the banks of the Meer, where it forms a bay sheltered by impending forests; the water, tinged by their reflection with a deep cerulean, calm and tranquil. Mountains of pine and beech rising above, close every outlet; and, no village or spire peeping out of the foliage, impress an idea of more than European solitude. I could contentedly have passed a summer's moon in these retirements, hollowed myself a canoe, and fished for sustenance.

From the shore of Wallersee, our road led us straight through arching groves, which the axe seems never to have violated, to the summit of a rock covered with spurge-laurel, and worn by the course of torrents into innumerable craggy forms. Beneath, lay extended a chaos of shattered cliffs, with tall pines springing from their crevices, and rapid streams

* See the description of the Grande Chartreuse.

hurrying between their intermingled trunks and branches. As yet, no hut appeared, no mill, no bridge, no trace of human existence.

After a few hours' journey through the wilderness, we began to discover a wreath of smoke; and presently the cottage from whence it arose, composed of planks, and reared on the very brink of a precipice. Piles of cloven spruce-fir were dispersed before the entrance, on a little spot of verdure browsed by goats; near them sat an aged man with hoary whiskers, his white locks tucked under a fur cap. Two or three beautiful children, their hair neatly braided, played around him; and a young woman, dressed in a short robe and Polish-looking bonnet, peeped out of a wicket window.

I was so much struck with the exotic appearance of this sequestered family, that, crossing a rivulet, I clambered up to their cottage and begged some refreshment. Immediately there was a contention amongst the children, who should be the first to oblige me. A little black-eyed girl succeeded, and brought me an earthen jug full of milk, with crumbled bread, and a platter of strawberries fresh picked from the bank. I reclined in the midst of my smiling hosts, and spread my repast on the turf: never could I be waited upon with more hospitable grace. The only thing I wanted was language to express my gratitude; and it was this deficiency which made me quit them so soon. The old man seemed visibly concerned at my departure; and his children followed me a long way down the rocks, talking in a dialect which passes all understanding, and waving their hands to bid me adieu.

I had hardly lost sight of them and regained my carriage before we entered a forest of pines, to all appearance without bounds, of every age and figure; some, feathered to the ground with flourishing branches; others, decayed into shapes like Lapland idols. I can imagine few situations more dreadful than to be lost at night amidst this confusion of trunks, hollow winds whistling among the branches, and strewing their cones below. Even at noonday, I thought we should never have found our way out.

At last, having descended a long avenue, endless perspectives opening on either side, we emerged into a valley bounded by swelling hills, divided into agreeable shady inclosures, where many herds were grazing. A rivulet flows along the pastures

beneath; and after winding through the village of Boidou, loses itself in a narrow pass amongst the cliffs and precipices which rise above the cultivated slopes, and frame in this happy pastoral region. All the plain was in sunshine, the sky blue, and the heights illuminated, except one rugged peak with spires of rock, shaped not unlike the views I have seen of Sinai, and wrapped, like that sacred mount, in clouds and darkness. At the base of this tremendous mass, lies a neat hamlet called Mittenvald, surrounded by thickets and banks of verdure, and watered by frequent springs, whose sight and murmurs were so reviving in the midst of a sultry day, that we could not think of leaving their vicinity, but remained at Mittenvald the whole evening.

Our inn had long airy galleries, and a pleasant balcony fronting the mountain. In one of these we dined upon trout fresh from the rills, and cherries just culled from the orchards that cover the slopes above. The clouds were dispersing, and the topmost peak half visible, before we ended our repast. Every moment discovering some inaccessible cliff or summit, shining through the mists, and tinted by the sun with pale golden colours. These appearances filled me with such delight and with such a train of romantic associations, that I left the table and ran to an open field beyond the huts and gardens, to gaze in solitude and catch the vision before it dissolved away. You, if any human being is able, may conceive true ideas of these glowing vapours sailing over the pointed rocks, and brightening them in their passage with amber light.

When all were faded and lost in the blue ether, I had time to look around me and notice the mead in which I was standing. Here, clover covered its surface; there, crops of grain; further on, beds of herbs and the sweetest flowers. An amphitheatre of hills and rocks, broken into a variety of glens and precipices, guards the plain from intrusion, and opens a course for several clear rivulets, which, after gurgling amidst loose stones and fragments, fall down the steeps, and are concealed and quieted in the herbage of the vale.

A cottage or two peep out of the woods that hang over the waterfalls; and on the brow of the hills above, appears a series of eleven little chapels, uniformly built. I followed the narrow path that leads to them, on the edge of the eminences, and met a troop of beautiful peasants, all of the name of

Anna (for it was her saintship's day), going to pay their devotions, severally, at these neat white fanes. There were faces that Guercino would not have disdained copying, with braids of hair the softest and most luxuriant I ever beheld. Some had wreathed it simply with flowers, other with rolls of a thin linen (manufactured in the neighbourhood), and disposed it with a degree of elegance one should not have expected on the cliffs of the Tyrol.

Being arrived, they knelt all together at the first chapel, on the steps, a minute or two, whispered a short prayer, and then dispersed each to her fane. Every little building had now its fair worshipper, and you may well conceive how much such figures, scattered about the landscape, increased its charms. Notwithstanding the fervour of their adorations (for at intervals they sighed and beat their white bosoms with energy), several bewitching profane glances were cast at me as I passed by. Don't be surprised, then, if I became a convert to idolatry in so amiable a form, and worshipped St. Anna on the score of her namesakes.

When got beyond the last chapel, I began to hear the roar of a cascade in a thick wood of beech and chestnut that clothes the steeps of a wide fissure in the rock. My ear soon guided me to its entrance, which was marked by a shed encompassed with mossy fragments, and almost concealed by bushes of the caper-plant in full red bloom. Amongst these I struggled, till, reaching a goat-track, it conducted me, on the brink of the foaming waters, to the very depths of the cliff, whence issues a stream which dashes impetuously down, strikes against a ledge of rocks, and sprinkles the impending thicket with dew. Big drops hung on every spray, and glittered on the leaves partially gilt by the rays of the declining sun, whose mellow hues softened the summits of the cliffs, and diffused a repose, a divine calm, over this deep retirement, which inclined me to imagine it the extremity of the earth, and the portal of some other region of existence ; some happy world beyond the dark groves of pine, the caves and awful mountains, where the river takes its source ! I hung eagerly on the gulph, impressed with this idea, and fancied myself listening to a voice that bubbled up with the waters; then looked into the abyss and strained my eyes to penetrate its gloom, but all was dark and unfathomable as futurity ! Awakening from my

reverie, I felt the damps of the water chill my forehead, and ran shivering out of the vale to avoid them. A warmer atmosphere, that reigned in the meads I had wandered across before, tempted me to remain a good while longer, collecting the wild pinks with which they are strewed in profusion, and a species of thyme scented like myrrh. Whilst I was thus employed, a confused murmur struck my ear, and, on turning towards a cliff, backed by the woods from whence the sound seemed to proceed, forth issued a herd of goats, hundreds after hundreds, skipping down the steeps: then followed two shepherd boys, gamboling together as they drove their creatures along: soon after, the dog made his appearance, hunting a stray heifer which brought up the rear. I followed them with my eyes till lost in the windings of the valley, and heard the tinkling of their bells die gradually away. Now the last blush of crimson left the summit of Sinai, inferior mountains being long since cast in deep blue shades. The village was already hushed when I regained it, and in a few moments I followed its example.

July 27th.—We pursued our journey to Inspruck, through the wildest scenes of wood and mountain that were ever traversed, the rocks now beginning to assume a loftier and more majestic appearance, and to glisten with snows. I had proposed passing a day or two at Inspruck, visiting the castle of Ambras, and examining Count Eysenberg's cabinet, enriched with the rarest productions of the mineral kingdom, and a complete collection of the moths and flies peculiar to the Tyrol; but, upon my arrival, the azure of the skies and the brightness of the sunshine inspired me with an irresistible wish of hastening to Italy. I was now too near the object of my journey, to delay possession any longer than absolutely necessary; so, casting a transient look on Maximilian's tomb, and the bronze statues of Tyrolese Counts and worthies, solemnly ranged in the church of the Franciscans, set immediately off.

We crossed a broad noble street, terminated by a triumphal arch, and were driven along the road to the foot of a mountain waving with fields of corn, and variegated with wood and vineyards, encircling lawns of the finest verdure, scattered over with white houses glistening in the sun. Upon ascending the mount, and beholding a vast range of prospects of

a similar character, I almost repented my impatience, and looked down with regret upon the cupolas and steeples we were leaving behind. But the rapid succession of lovely and romantic scenes soon effaced the former from my memory.

Our road, the smoothest in the world (though hewn in the bosom of rocks), by its sudden turns and windings, gave us, every instant, opportunities of discovering new villages, and forests rising beyond forests; green spots in the midst of wood, high above on the mountains, and cottages perched on the edge of promontories. Down, far below, in the chasm, amidst a confusion of pines and fragments of stone, rages the torrent Inn, which fills the country far and wide with a perpetual murmur. Sometimes we descended to its brink, and crossed over high bridges; sometimes mounted half-way up the cliffs, till its roar and agitation became, through distance, inconsiderable.

After a long ascent, the shades of evening reposing in the valleys, and the upland snows still tinged with a vivid red, we reached Schönberg, a village well worthy of its appellation: and then, twilight drawing over us, began to descend. We could now but faintly discover the opposite mountains, veined with silver rills, when we came once more to the banks of the Inn. This turbulent stream accompanied us all the way to Steinach, and broke by its continual roar the stillness of the night, which had finished half its course before we were settled to rest.

July 28th.—I rose early to scent the fragrance of the vegetation, bathed in a shower which had lately fallen, and looking around me, saw nothing but crags hanging over crags, and the rocky shores of the stream, still dark with the shade of the mountains. The small opening in which Steinach is situated, terminates in a gloomy strait, scarce leaving room for the road and the torrent, which does not understand being thwarted, and will force its way, let the pines grow ever so thick, or the rocks be ever so considerable.

Notwithstanding the forbidding air of this narrow dell, Industry has contrived to enliven its steeps with habitations, to raise water by means of a wheel, and to cover the surface of the rocks with soil. By this means large crops of oats and flax are produced, and most of the huts have gardens adjoining,

which are filled with poppies, seeming to thrive in this parched situation.

> "Urit enim lini campum seges, urit avenæ,
> Urunt Lethæo perfusa papavera somno."

The farther we advanced in the dell, the larger were the plantations which discovered themselves. For what purpose these gaudy flowers meet with such encouragement, I had neither time nor language to inquire; the mountaineers stuttering a gibberish unintelligible even to Germans. Probably opium is extracted from them; or, perhaps, if you love a conjecture, Morpheus has transferred his abode from the Cimmerians, and has perceived a cavern somewhere or other in the recesses of these endless mountains. Poppies, you know, in poetic travels, always denote the skirts of his soporific reign, and I don't remember a region better calculated for undisturbed repose than the narrow clefts and gullies which run up amongst these rocks, lost in vapours impervious to the sun, and moistened by rills and showers, whose continual tricklings inspire a drowsiness not easily to be resisted. Add to these circumstances the waving of the pines, with the hum of bees seeking their food in the crevices, and you will have as sleepy a region as that in which Spenser and Ariosto have placed the nodding deity.

At present, I must confess, I should not dislike submitting to his empire, for a few months or years, just as it might happen, whilst Europe is distracted by demons of revenge and war; whilst they are strangling at Venice, and tearing each other to pieces in unhappy London; whilst Etna and Vesuvius give signs of uncommon wrath; America welters in her blood; and almost every quarter of the globe is filled with carnage and devastation. This is the moment to humble ourselves before the God of Sleep; to beseech him to open his dusky portals; and admit us into the repose of his retired kingdom. If you are inclined to become a suppliant, hasten to the Tyrol, and we will search together about the mountains, traverse the poppy-meads, and look into every chasm and fissure that excludes daylight, in hopes of discovering the mansion of repose. Then when we have found this corner (or I think our search will be successful) Morpheus will give us an approving nod, and beckon us in silence to a couch, where,

soon lulled by the murmurs of the place, we shall sink into oblivion and tranquillity. But we may as well keep our eyes open for the present, till we have made this important discovery, and look at the beautiful country round Brixen, whither I arrived in the cool of the evening, and breathed the freshness of a garden, immediately beneath my window. The thrushes, warbling amongst its shades, saluted me, the moment I awoke next morning.

July 29th.—We proceeded over fertile mountains to Bolsano. Here first I noticed the rocks cut into terraces, thick set with melons and Indian corn; gardens of fig-trees and pomegranates hanging over walls, clustered with fruit; amidst them, a little pleasant cot, shaded by cypresses. In the evening we perceived several further indications of approaching Italy; and after sunset the Adige, rolling its full tide between precipices, which looked awful in the dusk. Myriads of fire-flies sparkled amongst the shrubs on the bank. I traced the course of these exotic insects by their blue light, now rising to the summits of the trees, now sinking to the ground and associating with vulgar glow-worms. We had opportunities enough to remark their progress, since we travelled all night; such being my impatience to reach the promised land!

Morning dawned just as we saw Trent dimly before us. I slept a few hours, then set out again (July 30th), after the heats were in some degree abated, and leaving Bergine, where the peasants were feasting before their doors, in their holiday dresses, with red pinks stuck in their ears instead of rings, and their necks surrounded with coral of the same colour, we came through a woody valley to the banks of a lake, filled with the purest and most transparent water, which loses itself in shady creeks, amongst hills robed with verdure from their bases to their summits.

The shores present one continual shrubbery, interspersed with knots of larches and slender almonds, starting from the underwood. A cornice of rock runs round the whole, except where the trees descend to the very brink, and dip their boughs in the water.

It was five o'clock when I caught the sight of this unsuspected lake, and the evening shadows stretched nearly across it. Gaining a very rapid ascent, we looked down upon its placid bosom, and saw several airy peaks rising above the

tufted foliage of the groves around. I quitted the contemplation of them with regret, and, in a few hours, arrived at Borgo di Volsugano, the scenes of the lake still present before the eye of my fancy.

July 31st.—My heart beat quick when I saw some hills, not very distant, which I was told lay in the Venetian State, and I thought an age, at least, had elapsed before we were passing their base. The road was never formed to delight an impatient traveller; loose pebbles and rolling stones render it, in the highest degree, tedious and jolting. I should not have spared my execrations, had it not traversed a picturesque valley, overgrown with juniper, and strewed with fragments of rock, precipitated, long since, from the surrounding eminences, blooming with cyclamens.

I clambered up several of these crags,

"fra gli odoriferi ginepri,"

to gather the flowers I have just mentioned, and found them deliciously scented. Fratillarias, and the most gorgeous flies, many of which I here noticed for the first time, were fluttering about and expanding their wings to the sun. There is no describing the numbers I beheld, nor their gaily varied colouring. I could not find in my heart to destroy their felicity; to scatter their bright plumage and snatch them for ever from the realms of light and flowers. Had I been less compassionate, I should have gained credit with that respectable corps, the torturers of butterflies; and might, perhaps, have enriched their cabinets with some unknown captives. However, I left them imbibing the dews of heaven, in free possession of their native rights; and having changed horses at Tremolano, entered at length my long-desired Italy.

The pass is rocky and tremendous, guarded by a fortress (Covalo), in possession of the Empress Queen, and only fit, one should think, to be inhabited by her eagles. There is no attaining this exalted hold but by the means of a cord let down many fathoms by the soldiers, who live in dens and caverns, which serve also as arsenals, and magazines for powder; whose mysteries I declined prying into, their approach being a little too aërial for my earthly frame. A black vapour, tinging their entrance, completed the terror of the prospect, which I shall never forget.

For two or three leagues it continued much in the same style; cliffs, nearly perpendicular, on both sides, and the Brenta foaming and thundering below. Beyond, the rocks began to be mantled with vines and gardens. Here and there a cottage shaded with mulberries made its appearance, and we often discovered, on the banks of the river, ranges of white buildings, with courts and awnings, beneath which vast numbers were employed in manufacturing silk. As we advanced, the stream gradually widened, and the rocks receded; woods were more frequent and cottages thicker strown.

About five in the evening, we had left the country of crags and precipices, of mists and cataracts, and were entering the fertile territory of the Bassanese. It was now I beheld groves of olives, and vines clustering the summits of the tallest elms; pomegranates in every garden, and vases of citron and orange before almost every door. The softness and transparency of the air soon told me I was arrived in happier climates; and I felt sensations of joy and novelty run through my veins, upon beholding this smiling land of groves and verdure stretched out before me. A few glooming vapours, I can hardly call them clouds, rested upon the extremities of the landscape; and, through their medium, the sun cast an oblique and dewy ray. Peasants were returning homeward from the cultivated hillocks and corn-fields, singing as they went, and calling to each other over the hills; whilst the women were milking goats before the wickets of the cottages, and preparing their country fare.

I left them enjoying it, and soon beheld the ancient ramparts and cypresses of Bassano; whose classic appearance recalled the memory of former times, and answered exactly the ideas I had pictured to myself of Italian edifices. Though encompassed by walls and turrets, neither soldiers nor custom-house officers start out from their concealment, to question and molest a weary traveller, for such are the blessings of the Venetian State, at least of the Terra Firma provinces, that it does not contain, I believe, above four regiments. Istria, Dalmatia, and the maritime frontiers, are more formidably guarded, as they touch, you know, the whiskers of the Turkish empire.

Passing under a Doric gateway, we crossed the chief part of the town in the way to our locanda, pleasantly situated, and commanding a level green, where people walk and eat

ices by moonlight. On the right, the Franciscan church and convent, half hid in the religious gloom of pine and cypress; to the left, a perspective of walls and towers rising from the turf, and marking it, when I arrived, with long shadows; in front, where the lawn terminates, meadow, wood, and garden run quite to the base of the mountains.

Twilight coming on, this beautiful spot swarmed with people, sitting in circles upon the grass, refreshing themselves with cooling liquors or lounging upon the bank beneath the towers. They looked so free and happy that I longed to be acquainted with them; and by the interposition of a polite Venetian (who, though a perfect stranger, showed me the most engaging marks of attention), was introduced to a group of the principal inhabitants. Our conversation ended in a promise to meet the next evening at a country-house about a league from Bassano, and then to return together and sing to the praise of Pacchierotti, their idol, as well as mine.

You can have no idea what pleasure we mutually found in being of the same faith, and believing in one singer; nor can you imagine what effects that musical divinity produced at Padua, where he performed a few years ago, and threw his audience into such raptures, that it was some time before they recovered. One in particular, a lady of distinction, fainted away the instant she caught the pathetic accents of his voice, and was near dying a martyr to its melody. La Contessa Roberti, who sings in the truest taste, gave me a detail of the whole affair. "Egli ha fatto veramente un fanatismo a Padua," was her expression. I assured her we were not without idolatry in England, upon his account; but that in this, as well as in other articles of belief, there were many abominable heretics.

August 1st.—The whole morning not a soul stirred who could avoid it. Those who were so active and lively the night before, were now stretched languidly upon their couches. Being to the full as idly disposed, I sat down and wrote some of this dreaming epistle; then feasted upon figs and melons; then got under the shade of the cypress, and slumbered till evening, only waking to dine, and take some ice.

The sun declining apace, I hastened to my engagement at Mosolente (for so is the villa called), placed on a verdant hill encircled by others as lovely, and consisting of three light

pavilions connected by porticos: just such as we admire in the fairy scenes of an opera. A vast flight of steps leads to the summit, where Signora Roberti and her friends received me with a grace and politeness that can never want a place in my memory. We rambled over all the apartments of this agreeable edifice, characterised by airiness and simplicity. The pavement incrusted with a composition as cool and polished as marble; the windows, doors, and balconies adorned with silvered iron work, commanding scenes of meads and woodlands that extend to the shores of the Adriatic; spires and cypresses rising above the levels; and the hazy mountains beyond Padua, diversifying the expanse, form altogether a landscape which the elegant imagination of Horizonti never exceeded. Beyond the villa, a tumble of hillocks present themselves in a variety of forms, with dips and hollows between, scattered over with leafy trees and vines dangling in continued garlands.

I gazed on this rural view till it faded in the dusk; then returning to Bassano, repaired to an illuminated hall, and had the felicity of hearing La Signora Roberti sing the very air which had excited such transport at Padua. As soon as she had ended, and that I could hear no more those affecting sounds, which had held me silent and almost breathless for several moments, a band of various instruments stationed in the open street began a lively symphony, which would have delighted me at any other time; but now, I wished them a thousand leagues away, so melancholy an impression did the air I had been listening to leave on my mind.

At midnight I took leave of my obliging hosts, who were just setting out for Padua. They gave me a thousand kind invitations, and I hope some future day to accept them.

August 2nd.—Our route to Venice lay winding about the variegated plains I had surveyed from Mosolente; and after dining at Treviso we came in two hours and a half to Mestre, between grand villas and gardens peopled with statues. Embarking our baggage at the last-mentioned place, we stepped into a gondola, whose even motion was very agreeable after the jolts of a chaise. Stretched beneath the awning, I enjoyed at my ease the freshness of the gales, and the sight of the waters. We were soon out of the canal of Mestre, terminated by an isle which contains a cell dedicated to the Holy Virgin,

peeping out of a thicket from whence spire up two tall cypresses. Its bells tingled as we passed along and dropped some paolis into a net tied at the end of a pole stretched out to us for that purpose.

As soon as we had doubled the cape of this diminutive island, an azure expanse of sea opened to our view, the domes and towers of Venice rising from its bosom. Now we began to distinguish Murano, St. Michele, St. Giorgio in Alga, and several other islands, detached from the grand cluster, which I hailed as old acquaintances; innumerable prints and drawings having long since made their shapes familiar. Still gliding forward, the sun casting his last gleams across the waves, and reddening the different towers, we every moment distinguished some new church or palace in the city, suffused with the evening rays, and reflected with all their glow of colouring from the surface of the waters.

The air was still; the sky cloudless; a faint wind just breathing upon the deep, lightly bore its surface against the steps of a chapel in the island of Saint Secondo, and waved the veil before its portal, as we rowed by and coasted the walls of its garden, overhung with fig-trees and topped with Italian pines. The convent discovers itself through their branches, built in a style somewhat morisco, and level with the sea, except where the garden intervenes.

Here, meditation may indulge her reveries in the midst of the surges, and walk in cloisters, alone vocal with the whispers of the pine. I passed this consecrated spot soon after sunset, when daylight was expiring in the west, and when the distant woods of Fusina were lost in the haze of the horizon.

We were now drawing very near the city, and a confused hum began to interrupt the evening stillness; gondolas were continually passing and repassing, and the entrance of the Canal Reggio, with all its stir and bustle, lay before us. Our gondoliers turned with much address through a crowd of boats and barges that blocked up the way, and rowed smoothly by the side of a broad pavement, covered with people in all dresses and of all nations.

Leaving the Palazzo Pesaro, a noble structure with two rows of arcades and a superb rustic, behind, we were soon landed before the Leon Bianco, which being situated in one of the broadest parts of the grand canal, commands a most striking

assemblage of buildings. I have no terms to describe the variety of pillars, of pediments, of mouldings, and cornices, some Grecian, others Saracenical, that adorn these edifices, of which the pencil of Canaletti conveys so perfect an idea as to render all verbal description superfluous. At one end of this grand perspective appears the Rialto ; the sweep of the canal conceals the other.

The rooms of our hotel are as spacious and cheerful as I could desire ; a lofty hall, or rather gallery, painted with grotesque in a very good style, perfectly clean, floored with the stucco composition I have mentioned above, divides the house, and admits a refreshing current of air. Several windows near the ceiling look into this vast apartment, which serves in lieu of a court, and is rendered perfectly luminous by a glazed arcade, thrown open to catch the breezes. Through it I passed to a balcony which impends over the canal, and is twined round with plants forming a green festoon springing from two large vases of orange-trees placed at each end. Here I established myself to enjoy the cool, and observe, as well as the dusk would permit, the variety of figures shooting by in their gondolas.

As night approached, innumerable tapers glimmered through the awnings before the windows. Every boat had its lantern, and the gondolas moving rapidly along were followed by tracks of light, which gleamed and played upon the waters. I was gazing at these dancing fires when the sounds of music were wafted along the canals, and as they grew louder and louder, an illuminated barge, filled with musicians, issued from the Rialto, and stopping under one of the palaces, began a serenade, which was clamorous and suspended all conversation in the galleries and porticos ; till, rowing slowly away, it was heard no more. The gondoliers catching the air, imitated its cadences, and were answered by others at a distance, whose voices, echoed by the arch of the bridge, acquired a plaintive and interesting tone. I retired to rest, full of the sound ; and long after I was asleep, the melody seemed to vibrate in my ear.

August 3rd.—It was not five o'clock before I was aroused by a loud din of voices and splashing of water under my balcony. Looking out, I beheld the grand canal so entirely covered with fruits and vegetables, on rafts and in barges, that

I could scarcely distinguish a wave. Loads of grapes, peaches, and melons arrived, and disappeared in an instant, for every vessel was in motion; and the crowds of purchasers hurrying from boat to boat, formed one of the liveliest pictures imaginable. Amongst the multitudes, I remarked a good many whose dress and carriage announced something above the common rank; and upon inquiry I found they were noble Venetians, just come from their casinos, and met to refresh themselves with fruit, before they retired to sleep for the day.

Whilst I was observing them, the sun began to colour the balustrades of the palaces, and the pure exhilarating air of the morning drawing me abroad, I procured a gondola, laid in my provision of bread and grapes, and was rowed under the Rialto, down the grand canal, to the marble steps of S. Maria della Salute, erected by the Senate in performance of a vow to the Holy Virgin, who begged off a terrible pestilence in 1630. I gazed, delighted with its superb frontispiece and dome, relieved by a clear blue sky. To criticize columns or pediments of the different façades, would be time lost; since one glance upon the worst view that has been taken of them, conveys a far better idea than the most elaborate description. The great bronze portal opened whilst I was standing on the steps which lead to it, and discovered the interior of the dome, where I expatiated in solitude; no mortal appearing except an old priest who trimmed the lamps, and muttered a prayer before the high altar, still wrapped in shadows. The sunbeams began to strike against the windows of the cupola just as I left the church, and was wafted across the waves to the spacious platform in front of St. Giorgio Maggiore, by far the most perfect and beautiful edifice my eyes ever beheld.

When my first transport was a little subsided, and I had examined the graceful design of each particular ornament, and united the just proportion and grand effect of the whole in my mind, I planted my umbrella on the margin of the sea, and reclining under its shade, my feet dangling over the waters, viewed the vast range of palaces, of porticos, of towers, opening on every side and extending out of sight. The Doge's residence and the tall columns at the entrance of the place of St. Mark, form, together with the arcades of the public library, the lofty Campanile and the cupolas of the ducal church, one

of the most striking groups of buildings that art can boast of. To behold at one glance these stately fabrics, so illustrious in the records of former ages, before which, in the flourishing times of the republic, so many valiant chiefs and princes have landed, loaded with the spoils of different nations, was a spectacle I had long and ardently desired. I thought of the days of Frederic Barbarossa, when looking up the piazza of St. Mark, along which he marched in solemn procession, to cast himself at the feet of Alexander the Third, and pay a tardy homage to St. Peter's successor. Here were no longer those splendid fleets that attended his progress; one solitary galeass was all I beheld, anchored opposite the palace of the Doge, and surrounded by crowds of gondolas, whose sable hues contrasted strongly with its vermilion oars and shining ornaments. A party-coloured multitude was continually shifting from one side of the piazza to the other; whilst senators and magistrates in long black robes were already arriving to fill their respective charges.

I contemplated the busy scene from my peaceful platform, where nothing stirred but aged devotees creeping to their devotions; and, whilst I remained thus calm and tranquil, heard the distant buzz and rumour of the town. Fortunately a length of waves rolled between me and its tumults; so that I ate my grapes, and read Metastasio, undisturbed by officiousness or curiosity. When the sun became too powerful, I entered the nave, and applauded the genius of Palladio.

After I had admired the masterly structure of the roof and the lightness of its arches, my eyes naturally directed themselves to the pavement of white and ruddy marble, polished, and reflecting like a mirror the columns which rise from it. Over this I walked to a door that admitted me into the principal quadrangle of the convent, surrounded by a cloister supported on Ionic pillars, beautifully proportioned. A flight of stairs opens into the court, adorned with balustrades and pedestals, sculptured with elegance truly Grecian. This brought me to the refectory, where the chef-d'œuvre of Paul Veronese, representing the marriage of Cana in Galilee, was the first object that presented itself. I never beheld so gorgeous a group of wedding garments before; there is every variety of fold and plait that can possibly be imagined. The attitudes and countenances are more uniform, and the guests

appear a very genteel, decent sort of people, well used to the mode of their times and accustomed to miracles.

Having examined this fictitious repast, I cast a look on a long range of tables covered with very excellent realities, which the monks were coming to devour with energy, if one might judge from their appearance. These sons of penitence and mortification possess one of the most spacious islands of the whole cluster, a princely habitation, with gardens and open porticos, that engross every breath of air; and, what adds not a little to the charms of their abode, is the liberty of making excursions from it, whenever they have a mind.

The republic, wisely jealous of ecclesiastical influence, connives at these amusing rambles, and, by encouraging the liberty of monks and churchmen, prevents their appearing too sacred and important in the eyes of the people, who have frequent proofs of their being mere flesh and blood, and that of the frailest composition. Had the rest of Italy been of the same opinion, and profited as much by Fra Paolo's maxims, some of its fairest fields would not, at this moment, lie uncultivated, and its ancient spirit might have revived. However, I can scarcely think the moment far distant, when it will assert its natural prerogatives, awake from its ignoble slumber, and look back upon the tiara, with all its host of idle fears and scaring phantoms, as the offspring of a distempered dream. Scarce a sovereign supports any longer this vain illusion, except the old woman of Hungary, and as soon as her dim eyes are closed we shall probably witness great events.*

Full of prophecies and bodings, I moved slowly out of the cloisters; and, gaining my gondola, arrived, I know not how, at the flights of steps which lead to the Redenptore, a structure so simple and elegant, that I thought myself entering an antique temple, and looked about for the statue of the God of Delphi, or some other graceful divinity. A huge crucifix of bronze soon brought me to times present.

The charm being thus dissolved, I began to perceive the shapes of rueful martyrs peeping out of the niches around, and the bushy beards of Capuchin friars wagging before the altars. These good fathers had decorated their church,

* The conduct of the emperor, since the death of his mother, seems to be accomplishing this prediction apace.

according to custom, with orange and citron trees, placed between the pilasters of the arcades; and on grand festivals, it seems, they turn the whole church into a bower, strew the pavement with leaves, and festoon the dome with flowers.

I left them occupied with their plants and their devotions. It was midday, and I begged to be rowed to some woody island, where I might dine in shade and tranquillity. My gondoliers shot off in an instant; but, though they went at a very rapid rate, I wished to fly faster, and getting into a bark with six oars, swept along the waters, soon left the Zecca and San Marco behind; and, launching into the plains of shining sea, saw turret after turret, and isle after isle, fleeting before me. A pale greenish light ran along the shores of the distant continent, whose mountains seemed to catch the motion of my boat, and to fly with equal celerity.

I had not much time to contemplate the beautiful effects on the waters—the emerald and purple hues which gleamed along their surface. Our prow struck, foaming, against the walls of the Carthusian garden, before I recollected where I was, or could look attentively around me. Permission being obtained, I entered this cool retirement, and putting aside with my hands the boughs of fig-trees and pomegranates, got under an ancient bay, near which several tall pines lift themselves up to the breezes. I listened to the conversation they held, with a wind just flown from Greece, and charged, as well as I could understand this airy language, with many affectionate remembrances from their relations on Mount Ida.

I reposed amidst bay leaves, fanned by a constant air, till it pleased the fathers to send me some provisions, with a basket of fruit and wine. Two of them would wait upon me, and ask ten thousand questions about Lord George Gordon, and the American war. I, who was deeply engaged with the winds, and fancied myself hearing these rapid travellers relate their adventures, wished my interrogators in purgatory, and pleaded ignorance of the Italian language. This circumstance extricated me from my difficulties, and procured me a long interval of repose.

The rustling of the pines had the same effect as the murmurs of other old story-tellers, and I slept undisturbed till the people without, in the boat (who wondered not a little, I dare say, what the deuce was become of me within), began a sort of

chorus in parts, full of such plaintive modulation, that I still thought myself under the influence of a dream, and, half in this world and half in the other, believed, like the heroes of Fingal, that I had caught the music of the spirits of the hill.

When I was thoroughly convinced of the reality of these sounds, I moved towards the shore from whence they proceeded: a glassy sea lay full before me; no gale ruffled the expanse; every breath was subsided, and I beheld the sun go down in all its sacred calm. You have experienced the sensations this moment inspires; imagine what they must have been in such a scene, and accompanied with a melody so simple and pathetic. I stepped into my boat, and instead of encouraging the speed of the gondoliers, begged them to abate their ardour, and row me lazily home. They complied, and we were near an hour reaching the platform before the ducal palace, thronged as usual with a variety of nations. I mixed a moment with the crowd; then directed my steps to the great mosque, —I ought to say the church of St. Mark; but really its cupolas, slender pinnacles, and semicircular arches, have so oriental an appearance, as to excuse this appellation. I looked a moment at the four stately coursers of bronze and gold that adorn the chief portal, and then took in, at one glance, the whole extent of the square, with its towers and standards. So noble an assemblage never met my eyes. I envied the good fortune of Petrarch, who describes, in one of his letters, a tournament held in this princely opening.

Many are the festivals which have been here celebrated. When Henry the Third left Poland to mount the throne of France, he passed through Venice, and found the republic waiting to receive him in their famous square, which by means of an awning stretched from the balustrades of opposite palaces, was metamorphosed into a vast saloon, sparkling with artificial stars, and spread with the richest carpets of the East. What a magnificent idea! The ancient Romans, in the zenith of power and luxury, never conceived a greater. It is to them the Venetians are indebted for the hint, since we read of the Coliseo and Pompey's theatre being sometimes covered with transparent canvas, to defend the spectators from the heat or sudden rain, and to tint the scene with soft agreeable colours, like the hues of the declining sun.

Having enjoyed the general perspective of the piazza, I

GRAND CANAL, VENICE.

began to enter into particulars, and examine the bronze pedestals of the three standards before the great church, designed by Sansovino in the true spirit of the antique, and covered with relievos, at the same time bold and elegant. It is also to this celebrated architect we are indebted for the stately façade of the Proccuratie nuove, which forms one side of the square, and presents an uninterrupted series of arcades and marble columns exquisitely wrought. Opposite this magnificent range appears another line of palaces, whose architecture, though far removed from the Grecian purity of Sansovino, impresses veneration, and completes the pomp of the view.

There is something strange and singular in the tower, which rises distinct from the smooth pavement of the square, a little to the left as you stand before the chief entrance of St. Mark's. The design is rather barbarous, and terminates in uncouth and heavy pyramids; yet in spite of these defects it struck me with awe. A beautiful building called the Loggetta, and which serves as a guard-house during the convocation of the grand council, decorates its base. Nothing can be more enriched, more finished than this structure; which, though far from diminutive, is in a manner lost at the foot of the Campanile. This enormous mass seems to promise a very long duration, and will probably carry down the fame of St. Mark and his Lion to the latest posterity. Both appear in great state towards its summit, and have nothing superior, but an archangel perched on the topmost pinnacle, and pointing to the skies. The dusk prevented my remarking the various sculptures with which the Loggetta is crowded.

Crossing the ample space between this elegant edifice and the ducal palace, I passed through a labyrinth of pillars and entered the principal court, of which nothing but the great outline was visible at so late an hour. Two reservoirs of bronze, rich with sculptured foliage, diversify the area. In front a magnificent flight of steps presents itself, by which the senators ascend through vast and solemn corridors, which lead to the interior of the edifice. The colossal statues of Mars and Neptune guard the entrance, and have given the appellation of *scala dei giganti* to the steps below, which I mounted not without respect; and, leaning against the balustrades, formed like the rest of the building of the rarest marbles, adored the tutelary divinities.

My devotions were shortly interrupted by one of the sbirri, or officers of police, who take their stands after sunset before the avenues of the palace, and who told me the gates were upon the point of being closed. So, hurrying down the steps, I left half my vows unpaid and a million of delicate sculptures unexplored; for every pilaster, every frieze, every entablature, is incrusted with porphyry, verde antique, or some other curious marble, carved into as many grotesque wreaths and mouldings as we admire in the loggios of Raffaello. The various portals, the strange projections, the length of cloisters; in short, the noble irregularity of these imperial piles, delighted me beyond idea; and I was sorry to be forced to abandon them so soon, especially as the twilight, which bats and owls love not better than I do, enlarged every portico, lengthened every colonnade, and increased the dimensions of the whole, just as imagination desired. This faculty would have had full scope had I but remained an hour longer. The moon would then have gleamed upon the gigantic forms of Mars and Neptune, and discovered the statues of ancient heroes emerging from the gloom of their niches.

Such an interesting assemblage of objects, such regal scenery, with the reflection that half their ornaments once contributed to the decoration of Athens, transported me beyond myself. The sbirri thought me distracted. True enough, I was stalking proudly about like an actor in an ancient Grecian tragedy, lifting up his hands to the consecrated fanes and images around, expecting the reply of his attendant chorus, and declaiming the first verses of Œdipus Tyrannus.

These fits of enthusiasm were hardly subsided, when I issued from the gates of the palace into the great square, which received a faint gleam from its casinos and palaces, just beginning to be lighted up, and become the resort of pleasure and dissipation. Numbers were walking in parties upon the pavement; some sought the shade of the porticos with their favourites; others were earnestly engaged in conversation, and filled the gay illuminated apartments, where they resorted to drink coffee and sorbet, with laughter and merriment. A thoughtless giddy transport prevailed; for, at this hour, anything like restraint seems perfectly out of the question; and however solemn a magistrate or senator may appear in the day, at night he lays up wig and robe and gravity to sleep

together, runs intriguing about in his gondola, takes the reigning sultana under his arm, and so rambles half over the town, which grows gayer and gayer as the day declines.

Many of the noble Venetians have a little suite of apartments in some out-of-the-way corner, near the grand piazza, of which their families are totally ignorant. To these they skulk in the dusk, and revel undisturbed with the companions of their pleasures. Jealousy itself cannot discover the alleys, the winding passages, the unsuspected doors, by which these retreats are accessible. Many an unhappy lover, whose mistress disappears on a sudden with some fortunate rival, has searched for her haunts in vain. The gondoliers themselves, though the prime managers of intrigue, are scarce ever acquainted with these interior cabinets. When a gallant has a mind to pursue his adventures with mystery, he rows to the piazza, orders his bark to wait, meets his goddess in the crowd, and vanishes from all beholders. Surely, Venice is the city in the universe best calculated for giving scope to the observations of a devil upon two sticks. What a variety of lurking-places would one stroke of his crutch uncover!

Whilst the higher ranks were solacing themselves in their casinos, the rabble were gathered in knots round the strollers and mountebanks, singing and scaramouching in the middle of the square. I observed a great number of Orientals amongst the crowd, and heard Turkish and Arabic muttering in every corner. There the Sclavonian dialect predominated; there some Grecian jargon, almost unintelligible. Had St. Mark's church been the wondrous tower, and its piazza the chief square, of the city of Babylon, there could scarcely have been a greater confusion of languages.

The novelty of the scene afforded me no small share of amusement, and I wandered about from group to group, and from one strange exotic to another, asking and being asked innumerable ridiculous questions, and settling the politics of London and Constantinople, almost in the same breath. This instant, I found myself in a circle of grave Armenian priests and jewellers; the next amongst Greeks and Dalmatians, who accosted me with the smoothest compliments, and gave proof that their reputation for pliability and address was not ill-founded.

I was entering into a grand harum-scarum discourse with some Russian Counts or Princes, or whatever you please, just

landed with dwarfs, and footmen, and governors, and staring, like me, about them, when Mad. de R. arrived, to whom I had the happiness of being recommended. She very obligingly presented me to some of the most distinguished of the Venetian families at their great casino, which looks into the piazza, and consists of five or six rooms, fitted up in a gay flimsy taste, neither rich nor elegant, where were a great many lights, and a great many ladies negligently dressed, their hair falling very freely about them, and innumerable adventures written in their eyes. The gentlemen were lolling upon the sofas or lounging about the apartments.

The whole assembly seemed upon the verge of gaping, till coffee was carried round. This magic beverage diffused a temporary animation; and, for a moment or two, conversation moved on with a degree of pleasing extravagance; but the flash was soon dissipated, and nothing remained save cards and stupidity.

In the intervals of shuffling and dealing, some talked over the affairs of the grand council with less reserve than I expected; and two or three of them asked some feeble questions about the late tumults in London: as much, however, through indolence and forgetfulness, I should conjecture, as from any political motive, for I don't believe all those wise stories, which some travellers have propagated, of Venetian subtlety and profound silence. They might have reigned during the dark periods of the republic, but at this moment the veil is rent in fifty places; and without any wonderful penetration, the debates of the senate are discoverable. There doubtless was a time when, society being greatly divided, and little communication subsisting among the nobles, secrets were invariably kept; but since the establishment of casinos, which the ladies rule, where chit-chat and tittle-tattle are for ever going forwards, who can preserve a rigorous taciturnity upon any subject in the universe? It was one o'clock before all the company were assembled, and I left them at three, still dreaming over their coffee and card-tables. Trieze is their favourite game: *uno*, *due*, *tre*, *quatro*, *cinque*, *fante*, *cavallo* are eternally repeated; the apartments echoed no other sound.

No lively people could endure such monotony; yet I have been told the Venetians are remarkably spirited, and so eager in the pursuit of amusement as hardly to allow themselves

any sleep. Some, for instance, after declaiming in the Senate, walking an hour in the square, and fidgeting about from one casino to another till morning dawns, will get into a gondola, row across the Lagunes, take the post to Mestre or Fusina, and jumble over craggy pavements to Treviso, breakfast in haste, and rattle back again as if the devil were charioteer: by eleven the party is restored to Venice, resumes robe and periwig, and goes to council.

This may be very true, and yet I will never cite the Venetians as examples of vivacity. Their nerves, unstrung by disease and the consequences of early debaucheries, impede all lively flow of spirits in its course, and permit at best but a few moments of a false and feverish activity. The approaches of rest, forced back by an immoderate use of coffee, render them, too, weak and listless, and the facility of being wafted from place to place in a gondola, adds not a little to their indolence. In short, I can scarcely regard their Eastern neighbours in a more lazy light; and am apt to imagine that instead of slumbering less than other people, they pass their lives in one perpetual doze.

August 4th.—The heats were so excessive in the night, that I thought myself several times on the point of suffocation, tossed about like a wounded fish, and dreamt of the devil and Senegal. Towards sunrise, a faint breeze restored me to life and reason. I slumbered till late in the day, and the moment I was fairly awake, ordered my gondolier to row out to the main ocean, that I might plunge into its waves, and hear and see nothing but waters around me.

We shot off, wound amongst a number of sheds, shops, churches, casinos, and palaces, growing immediately out of the canals, without any apparent foundation. No quay, no terrace, not even a slab is to be seen before the doors; one step brings you from the hall into the bark, and the vestibules of the stateliest structures lie open to the waters, and level with them. I observed several, as I glided along, supported by rows of well-proportioned pillars, adorned with terms and vases, beyond which the eye generally discovers a grand court, and sometimes a garden.

In about half an hour, we had left the thickest cluster of isles behind, and, coasting the Place of St. Mark opposite to San Giorgio Maggiore, whose elegant frontispiece was painted on the calm waters, launched into the blue expanse of sea,

from which rise the Chartreuse and two or three other woody islands. I hailed the spot where I had passed such a happy visionary evening, and nodded to my friends the pines.

A few minutes more brought me to a dreary, sun-burnt shore, stalked over by a few Sclavonian soldiers, who inhabit a castle hard by, go regularly to an ugly unfinished church, and from thence, it is to be hoped, to paradise; as the air of their barracks is abominable, and kills them like blasted sheep.

Forlorn as this island appeared to me, I was told it was the scene of the Doge's pageantry at the feast of the Ascension; and the very spot to which he sails in the *Bucentaur*, previously to wedding the sea. You have heard enough, and if ever you looked into a show-box, seen full sufficient of this gaudy spectacle, without my enlarging upon the topic. I shall only say, that I was obliged to pursue, partly, the same road as the nuptial procession, in order to reach the beach, and was broiled and dazzled accordingly.

At last, after traversing some desert hillocks, all of a hop with toads and locusts (amongst which English heretics have the honour of being interred), I passed under an arch, and suddenly the boundless plains of ocean opened to my view. I ran to the smooth sands, extending on both sides out of sight, cast off my clothes, and dashed into the waves, which were coursing one another with a gentle motion, and breaking lightly on the shores. The tide rolled over me as I lay floating about, buoyed up by the water, and carried me wheresoever it listed. It might have borne me far out into the main, and exposed me to a thousand perils, before I had been aware, so totally was I abandoned to the illusion of the moment. My ears were filled with murmuring undecided sounds; my limbs, stretched languidly on the surge, rose or sunk just as it swelled or subsided. In this passive, senseless state I remained, till the sun cast a less intolerable light, and the fishing vessels, lying out in the bay at a great distance, spread their sails and were coming home.

Hastening back over the desert of locusts, I threw myself into the gondola; and, no wind or wave opposing, was soon wafted across to those venerable columns, so conspicuous in the Place of St. Mark. Directing my course immediately to the ducal palace, I entered the grand court, ascending the

Giant's stairs, and examined at my leisure its bas-reliefs. Then, taking the first guide that presented himself, I was shown along several cloisters and corridors, sustained by innumerable pillars, into the state apartments, which Tintoret and Paolo Veronese have covered with the triumphs of their country.

A swarm of lawyers filled the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, and one of the first advocates in the republic was pleading with all his might, before a solemn row of senators. The eyes and ears of the assembly seemed equally affected. Clouds of powder and volleys of execrations issuing every instant from the disputants, I got out of their way; and was led from hall to hall, and from picture to picture, with exemplary resignation. To be sure, I was heartily tired, but behaved with decency, having never once expressed how much I wished the chefs-d'œuvre I had been contemplating, less smoky and numerous.

At last, I reached once more the colonnades at the entrance, and caught the sea-breeze in the open porticos which front San Giorgio Maggiore. The walls are covered in most places with grim visages sculptured in marble, whose mouths gape for accusations, and swallow every lie that malice and revenge can dictate. I wished for a few ears of the same kind, dispersed about the Doge's residence, to which one might apply one's own, and catch some account of the mysteries within; some little dialogue between the Three Inquisitors, or debate in the Council of Ten.

This is the tribunal which holds the wealthy nobility in continual awe; before which they appear with trembling and terror: and whose summons they dare not disobey. Sometimes, by way of clemency, it condemns its victims to perpetual imprisonment in close, stifling cells, between the leads and beams of the palace; or, unwilling to spill the blood of a fellow-citizen, generously sinks them into dungeons, deep under the canals which wash its foundations; so that, above and below, its majesty is contaminated by the abodes of punishment. What other sovereign could endure the idea of having his immediate residence polluted with tears? or revel in his halls, conscious that many of his species were consuming their hours in lamentations above his head, and that but a few beams separated him from the scene of their tortures? However gaily disposed, could one dance with pleasure on a

pavement, beneath which lie damp and gloomy caverns, whose inhabitants waste away by painful degrees, and feel themselves whole years a-dying? Impressed by these terrible ideas, I could not regard the palace without horror, and wished for the strength of a thousand antediluvians, to level it with the sea, lay open the secret recesses of punishment, and admit free gales and sunshine into every den.

When I had thus vented my indignation, I repaired to the statue of Neptune and invoked it to second my enterprise. Once upon a time no deity had a freer hand at razing cities. His execution was renowned throughout all antiquity, and the proudest monarchs deprecated the wrath of ΚΡΕΙΩΝ ΕΝΟΣΙΧΘΩΝ. But, like the other mighty ones of ancient days, his reign is past and his trident disregarded. Formerly any wild spirit found favour in the eyes of fortune, and was led along the career of glory to the deliverance of captives and the extirpation of monsters; but, in our degenerate times, this easy road to fame is no longer open, and the means of producing such signal events perplexed and difficult.

Abandoning, therefore, the sad tenants of the Piombi to their fate, I left the courts, and stepping into my bark, was rowed down a canal over which the lofty walls of the palace cast a tremendous shade. Beneath these fatal waters the dungeons I have also been speaking of are situated. There the wretches lie marking the sound of the oars, and counting the free passage of every gondola. Above, a marble bridge, of bold majestic architecture, joins the highest part of the prisons to the secret galleries of the palace; from whence criminals are conducted over the arch to a cruel and mysterious death. I shuddered whilst passing below; and believe it is not without cause, this structure is named PONTE DEI SOSPIRI. Horrors and dismal prospects haunted my fancy upon my return. I could not dine in peace, so strongly was my imagination affected; but snatching my pencil, I drew chasms and subterraneous hollows, the domain of fear and torture, with chains, racks, wheels, and dreadful engines, in the style of Piranesi. About sunset I went and refreshed myself with the cool air and cheerful scenery of the Fondamenti nuovi, a vast quay or terrace of white marble, which commands the whole series of isles, from San Michele's to Torcello,

"That rise and glitter o'er the ambient tide,"

Nothing can be more picturesque than the groups of towers and cupolas which they present, mixed with flat roofs and low buildings, and now and then a pine or cypress. Afar off, a little woody isle, called Il Deserto, swells from the ocean and diversifies its expanse.

When I had spent a delightful half-hour in viewing the distant isles, M. de. B. accompanied me to the Mendicanti, one of the four conservatorios, which give the best musical education conceivable to near one hundred young women. You may imagine how admirably those of the Mendicanti in particular are taught, since their establishment is under Bertoni's direction, who breathes around him the very soul of grace and harmony. The chapel in which we sat to hear the oratorio was dark and solemn; a screen of lofty pillars, formed of black marble and highly polished, excluded the glow of the western sky, and reflected the lamps which burn perpetually before the altar. Every tribune was thronged with people, whose profound silence showed them worthy auditors of Bertoni's compositions. Here were no cackling old women, or groaning Methodists, such as infest our English churches, and scare one's ears with hoarse coughs accompanied by the naso obligato. All were still and attentive, imbibing the plaintive notes of the voices with eagerness; and scarce a countenance but seemed deeply affected with David's sorrows, the subject of the performance. I sat retired in a solitary tribune, and felt them as my own. Night came on before the last chorus was sung, and I still seem to hear its sacred melody.

August 18*th.*—It rains; the air is refreshed and I have courage to resume my pen, which the sultry weather had forced to lie dormant so long. I like this odd town of Venice, and find every day some new amusement in rambling about its innumerable canals and alleys. Sometimes I go and pry about the great church of Saint Mark, and examine the variety of marbles and mazes of delicate sculpture with which it is covered. The cupola, glittering with gold, mosaic, and paintings of half the wonders in the Apocalypse, never fails transporting me to the period of the Eastern empire. I think myself in Constantinople, and expect Michael Paleologus with all his train. One circumstance alone prevents my observing half the treasures of the place, and holds down my fancy, just springing into the air: I mean the vile stench which exhales

from every recess and corner of the edifice, and which all the altars cannot subdue.

When oppressed by this noxious atmosphere, I run up the Campanile in the piazza, and seating myself amongst the pillars of the gallery, breathe the fresh gales which blow from the Adriatic; survey at my leisure all Venice beneath me, with its azure sea, white sails, and long tracts of islands shining in the sun. Having thus laid in a provision of wholesome breezes, I brave the vapours of the canals, and venture into the most curious and murky quarters of the city, in search of Turks and Infidels, that I may ask as many questions as I please about Damascus and Suristan, those happy countries which nature has covered with roses.

Asiatics find Venice very much to their liking, and all those I conversed with allowed its customs and style of living had a good deal of conformity to their own. The eternal lounging in coffee-houses and sipping of sorbets, agrees perfectly well with the inhabitants of the Ottoman empire, who stalk about here in their proper dresses, and smoke their own exotic pipes, without being stared and wondered at, as in most other European capitals. Some few of these Orientals are communicative and enlightened; but, generally speaking, they know nothing beyond the rule of three, and the commonest transactions of mercantile affairs.

The Greeks are by far a more lively generation, still retaining their propensity to works of genius and imagination. Metastasio has been lately translated into their modern jargon, and some obliging papa or other has had the patience to put the long-winded romance of Clelia into a Grecian dress. I saw two or three of these volumes exposed on a stall, under the grand arcades of the public library, as I went one day to admire the antiques in its vestibules.

Whilst I was intent upon my occupation, a little door, I never should have suspected, flew open, and out popped Monsieur de V., from a place where nothing, I believe, but broomsticks and certain other utensils were ever before deposited. This gentleman, the most active investigator of Homer since the days of the good bishop of Thessalonica, bespatters you with more learning in a minute than others communicate in half a year; quotes Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, etc., with a formidable fluency; and drove me from one end of the

room to the other with all the thunder of erudition. Syllables fell thicker than hail, and in an instant I found myself so weighed down and covered, that I prayed, for mercy's sake, to be introduced, by way of respite, to a Laplander whom he leads about as a curiosity; a poor, harmless, good sort of a soul, calm and indifferent, who has acquired the words of several Oriental languages to perfection: ideas he has, in none.

We went together to view a collection of medals in one of the Gradanigo palaces, and two or three inestimable volumes, filled with paintings that represent the dress of the ancient Venetians; so that I had an opportunity of observing to perfection all the Lapland nothingness of my companion. What a perfect void! Cold and silent as the polar regions, not one passion ever throbbed in his bosom; not one bright ray of fancy ever glittered in his mind; without love or anger, pleasure or pain, his days fleet smoothly along: all things considered, I must confess I envied such comfortable apathy.

After having passed a peaceful hour in dreaming over the medals and rarities, M. de V. was for conducting me to the Armenian convent, but I begged to be excused, and went to S. Giovanni e Paolo's, a church ever celebrated in the annals of painting, since it contains that masterpiece of Titian, "The Martyrdom of St. Peter." It being a festival, the huge Gothic pillars were covered with red damask, and the shrines of saints and worthies glimmered with tapers. The dim chapels on each side the nave received a feeble light, and discovered the tombs of ancient Doges, and the equestrian statues of many a doughty General. I admired them all, but liked nothing so much as a snug bas-relief I found out in a corner, which represents St. Mark and some other good souls a-prosing, whilst his lion and the old serpent squabble and scratch in the foreground of the sculpture, like cat and dog by the fireside. After dinner, when the shadows of domes and palaces began lengthening across the waves, I rowed out

"On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea,"

to observe the last sunbeams fade on the tufted gardens of the Giudecca, and to contemplate the distant Euganean hills, once the happiest region of Italy; where wandering nations enjoyed the simplicity of a pastoral life, long before the arrival of Antenor. In those ancient times, deep forests and extensive

pastures covered the shores* of the Adriatic, and innumerable flocks hung on the brow of the mountains. This golden period ended upon the incursion of the Trojans and Heneti; who, led by Antenor, drove away the unfortunate savages, and possessed themselves of their habitations.† The form of the hillocks is varied and picturesque, and the sun, sinking behind them, suffuses their summits with tints of the brightest orange. Scarce one evening have I failed to remark the changeful scenery of the clouds, and to fill my mind with recollections of primeval days and happier ages. Night generally surprises me in the midst of my reveries; I return, lulled in my gondola by the murmur of waters, pass about an hour with M. de R., whose imagination and sensibility almost equal your own; then, retire to sleep, and dream of the Euganeans.

LETTER IX.

August 27th.—I am just returned from visiting the isles of Burano, Torcello, and Mazorbo, distant about five miles from Venice. To these amphibious spots the Romans, inhabitants of eastern Lombardy, fled from the ravine of Attila; and, if we may believe Cassiodorus, there was a time when they presented a beautiful appearance. Beyond them, on the coast of the Lagunes, rose the once populous city of Altina, with its six stately gates, which Dandolo mentions.‡ Its neighbourhood was scattered with innumerable villas and temples, composing altogether a prospect which Martial compares to Baiæ:

"Æmula Baianis Altini littora villis."

But this agreeable scene, like so many others, is passed entirely away, and has left nothing, except heaps of stones and mis-shapen fragments, to vouch for its former magnificence. Two of the islands, Costanziaco and Amiano, that are imagined to have contained the bowers and gardens of the Altinatians, have sunk beneath the waters; those which remain are scarcely worthy to rise above their surface.

Though I was persuaded little was left to be seen above ground, I could not deny myself the imaginary pleasure of

* It is reasonably conjectured that the sea formerly washed the walls of Padua.

† T. Livius, L. i., c. 1.

‡ Lib. v., c. iv., p. 5.

treading a corner of the earth once so adorned and cultivated; and of walking over the roofs, perhaps, of concealed halls and undiscovered palaces. M. de R., to whom I communicated my ideas, entered at once into the scheme; hiring therefore a *peiotte*, we took some provisions and music (to us equally necessaries of life), and launched into the canal, between St. Michael and Murano.

The waves coursed each other with violence, and dark clouds hung over the grand sweep of northern mountains, whilst the west smiled with azure and bright sunshine. Thunder rolled awfully at a distance, and those white and greyish birds, the harbingers of storms, flitted frequently before our bark. For some moments we were in doubt whether to proceed; but as we advanced by a little dome in the Isle of St. Michael, shaped like an ancient temple, the sky cleared, and the ocean subsiding by degrees, soon presented a tranquil expanse, across which we were smoothly wafted. Our instruments played several delightful airs, that called forth the inhabitants of every island, and held them silent, as if spell-bound, on the edge of their quays and terraces, till we were out of hearing.

Leaving Murano far behind, Venice and its world of turrets began to sink on the horizon, and the low desert isles beyond Mazorbo to lie stretched out before us. Now we beheld vast wastes of * purple flowers, and could distinguish the low hum of the insects which hover above them; such was the silence of the place. Coasting these solitary fields, we wound amongst several serpentine canals, bordered by gardens of figs and pomegranates, with neat Indian-looking inclosures of cane and reed: an aromatic plant clothes the margin of the waters, which the people justly dignify with the title of marine incense. It proved very serviceable in subduing a musky odour, which attacked us the moment we landed, and which proceeds from serpents that lurk in the hedges. These animals, say the gondoliers, defend immense treasures which lie buried under the ruins. Woe to those who attempt invading them, or prying too cautiously about!

Not choosing to be devoured, we left many a mount of fragments unnoticed, and made the best of our way to a little green, free from weeds or adders, bounded on one side

* Called Roscani in Venetian, and reduced to ashes for the glass manufactory at Murano.

by a miserable shed, decorated with the name of the Podesta's residence, and on the other by a circular church. Some remains of tolerable antique sculpture are enchased in the walls; and the dome, supported by pillars of a smooth Grecian marble, though uncouth and ill-proportioned, impresses a sort of veneration, and transports the fancy to the twilight glimmering period when it was raised.

Having surveyed what little was visible, and given as much career to our imaginations as the scene inspired, we walked over a soil composed of crumbling bricks and cement to the cathedral; whose arches, turned on the ancient Roman principle, convinced us that it dates as high as the sixth or seventh century.

Nothing can be well more fantastic than the ornaments of this structure, formed from the ruins of the Pagan temples of Altina, and incrusted with a gilt mosaic, like that which covers our Edward the Confessor's tomb. The pavement, composed of various precious marbles, is richer and more beautiful than one could have expected, in a place where every other object savours of the grossest barbarism. At the farther end, beyond the altar, appears a semicircular niche, with seats like the gradines of a diminutive amphitheatre; above rise the quaint forms of the apostles, in red, blue, green, and black mosaic, and in the midst of the goodly group a sort of marble chair, cool and penitential enough, where St. Lorenzo Giustiniani sat to hold a provincial council, the Lord knows how long ago! The fount for holy water stands by the principal entrance, fronting this curious recess, and seems to have belonged to some place of Gentile worship. The figures of horned imps cling round its sides, more devilish, more Egyptian, than any I ever beheld. The dragons on old china are not more whimsical: I longed to have it filled with bats' blood, and to have sent it by way of present to the sabbath; I can assure you it would have done honour to their witcheries. The seulpture is not the most delicate, but I cannot say a great deal about it, as but little light reaches the spot where it is fixed. Indeed, the whole church is far from luminous, its windows being narrow and near the roof, with shutters composed of blocks of marble, which nothing but the last whirlwind, one should think, could move from their hinges.

By the time we had examined every nook and corner of

this singular edifice, and caught perhaps some small portion of sanctity by sitting in San Lorenzo's chair, dinner was prepared in a neighbouring convent, and the nuns, allured by the sound of our flutes and oboes, peeped out of their cells and showed themselves by dozens at the grate. Some few agreeable faces and interesting eyes enlivened the dark sisterhood; all seemed to catch a gleam of pleasure from the music; two or three of them, probably the last immured, let fall a tear, and suffered the recollection of the world and its profane joys to interrupt for a moment their sacred tranquillity.

We stayed till the sun was low, and the breezes blew cool from the ocean, on purpose that they might listen as long as possible to a harmony which seemed to issue, as the old abbess expressed herself, from the gates of paradise ajar. A thousand benedictions consecrated our departure; twilight came on just as we entered the bark and rowed out upon the waves, agitated by a fresh gale, but fearing nothing under the protection of St. Margherita, whose good wishes our music had secured.

In two hours we were safely landed at the Fondamenti nuovi, and went immediately to the Mendicanti, where they were performing the oratorio of Sisera. The composer, a young man, had displayed great fire and originality in this performance; and a knowledge of character seldom found in the most celebrated masters. The supplication of the thirsty chieftain, and Jael's insinuating arts and pious treachery, are admirably expressed; but the agitation and bodily slumbers which precede his death, are imagined in the highest strain of genius. The terror and agony of his dreams made me start, more than once, from my seat; and all the horrors of his assassination seemed full before me, so fatal was the sound of the instrument, so just the conduct of the harmony.

Too much applause cannot be given to the Marchetti, who sang the part of Sisera, and seconded the composer's ideas by the most feeling and spirited execution. There are few things I shall regret more at Venice, than this conservatorio. Whenever I am musically given, I fly to it, and hear the most striking finales in Bertoni's and Anfosse's operas, as long and often as I please.

The sight of the orchestra still makes me smile. You know, I suppose, it is entirely of the female gender, and that

nothing is more common than to see a delicate white hand journeying across an enormous double bass, or a pair of roseate cheeks puffing, with all their efforts, at a French horn. Some that are grown old and Amazonian, who have abandoned their fiddles and their lovers, take vigorously to the kettle-drum; and one poor limping lady, who had been crossed in love, now makes an admirable figure on the bassoon.

Good-night! I am quite exhausted with composing a chorus for these same Amazonians. The poetry I send you, which seems to be some of the most picturesque and nervous an Italian ever produced. The music takes up too much room to travel at present. One day or other, perhaps, we may hear it in some dark grove, when the moon is eclipsed and nature in alarm.

This is not the last letter you would receive from Venice, was I not hurrying to Lucca, where Pacchierotti sings next week, in the opera of Quinto Fabio, of all operas the most worthy to excuse such a musical fanaticism. Adieu.

LETTER X.

September 4th.—I was sorry to leave Venice, and regretted my peaceful excursions upon the Adriatic, when the Euganean hills were lost in a golden haze, and the sun cast his departing gleam across the waters. No bright rays illuminated my departure, but the coolness and perfume of the air made some amends for their absence.

About an hour's rowing from the isle of Saint Giorgio in Alga, brought us to the shores of Fusina, right opposite the opening where the Brenta mixes with the sea. This river flows calmly between banks of verdure, crowned by poplars, with vines twining round every stalk, and depending from tree to tree in beautiful festoons. Beds of mint and flowers clothe the brink of the stream, except where a tall growth of reeds and osiers lift themselves to the breezes. I heard their whispers as we glided along; and had I been alone might have told you what they said to me; but such aërial oracles must be approached in solitude. The morning continued to lower as we advanced; scarce a wind ventured to

breathe; all was still and placid as the surface of the Brenta. No sound struck my ears except the bargemen hallooing to open the sluices, and deepen the water.

As yet I had not perceived an habitation; no other objects than green inclosures and fields of Turkish corn, shaded with vines and poplars, met my eyes wherever I turned them.

Our navigation, the tranquil streams and cultivated banks, in short the whole landscape, had a sort of Chinese cast, which led me into Quang-Si and Quang-Tong. The variety of canes, reeds, and blooming rushes, shooting from the slopes, confirmed my fancies, and when I beheld the yellow nenupha expanding its broad leaves to the current, I thought of the Tao-Sé, and venerated one of the chief ingredients in their beverage of immortality. Landing where this magic vegetation appeared most luxuriant, I cropped the flowers; but searched in vain for the kernels, which, according to the doctrine of the Bonzes, produce such wonderful effects. Though I was deceived in this pursuit, I gained, however, in another. The bank upon which I had sprung presented a continual walk of level turf, surrounded by vines, concealing the trees which supported them, and forming the most delightful bowers. Under these garlands I passed, and gathered the ripe clusters which dangled around, convinced that Noah had discovered a far superior beverage to that of the Tao-Sé. Whilst I was thus agreeably employed, it began to rain, and the earth to exhale a fresh, reviving odour, highly grateful to one who had been so long confined to walls and waters. After breathing nothing but the essence of the canals and the flavours of the Rialto, after the jingling of bells and brawls of the gondoliers, imagine how agreeable it was to scent the perfume of clover, to tread a springing herbage, and listen in silence to the showers pattering amongst the leaves. I staid so long amidst the vines, that it grew late before we rowed by the Mira, a village of palaces, whose courts and gardens, as magnificent as statues, terraces, and vases can make them, compose a grand, though far from a rural prospect.

Not being greatly delighted with such scenery, we stayed no longer than our dinner required, and reached the Dolo an hour before sunset. Passing the great sluices, whose gates opened with a thundering noise, we continued our course along the peaceful Brenta, winding its broad full stream

through impenetrable copses, surmounted by tall waving poplars. Day was about to close when we reached Fiesso; and it being a misty evening, I could scarcely distinguish the pompous façade of the Pisani palace. That where we supped looks upon a broad mass of foliage, which I contemplated with pleasure as it sank in the dusk.

We walked a long while under a pavilion stretched before the entrance, breathing the freshness of the wood after the shower, and hearing the drops trickle down the awning above our heads. The Galuzzi sang some of her father Ferandini's compositions, with a fire, an energy, an expression, that one moment raised me to a pitch of heroism, and the next dissolved me in tears. Her cheek was flushed with inspiration, her eyes glistened; the whole tone of her countenance was like that of a person rapt and inspired. I forgot both time and place whilst she was breathing forth such celestial harmony. The night stole imperceptibly away, and morning dawned before I awoke from my trance. I don't recollect ever to have passed an evening, which every circumstance conspired so much to improve. In general, my musical pleasures suffer terrible abatements from the phlegm and stupidity of my neighbourhood, but here every one seemed to catch the flame, and to listen with reciprocal delight. The C—— threw quick around her the glancing fires of genius: and, what with the song of the Galuzzi, and those intellectual meteors, I scarcely knew to what element I was transported; and doubted for several moments whether I had not fallen into a celestial dream. I loathed the light of the morning star, which summoned me to depart; and, if I may express myself so poetically,

"Cast many a longing, ling'ring look behind."

LETTER XI.

September 5th.—The glow and splendour of the rising sun, for once in my life, drew little of my attention. I was too deeply plunged in my reveries, to notice the landscape which lay before me; and the walls of Padua presented themselves some time ere I was aware. At any other moment, how sensibly should I have been affected with their appearance! how many ideas of Antenor and his Trojans, would have

thronged into my memory! but now I regarded the scene with indifference, and passed many a palace, and many a woody garden, with my eyes riveted to the ground. The first object that appeared, upon lifting them up, was a confused pile of spires and cupolas, dedicated to blessed St. Anthony, who betook himself to the conversion of fish, after the heretics would lend no ear to his discourses.

You are too well apprised of the veneration I have always entertained for this ingenious preacher, to doubt that I immediately repaired to his shrine and offered up my little orisons before it. Mine was a disturbed spirit, and required all the balm of St. Anthony's kindness to appease it. Perhaps you will say I had better gone to bed, and applied myself to my sleepy friend, the pagan divinity. 'Tis probable that you are in the right; but I could not retire to rest without venting some portion of effervescence in sighs and supplications. The nave was filled with decrepit women and feeble children, kneeling by baskets of vegetables and other provisions; which, by good Anthony's interposition, they hoped to sell advantageously in the course of the day. Beyond these, nearer the choir, and in a gloomier part of the edifice, knelt a row of rueful penitents, smiting their breasts, and lifting their eyes to heaven. Further on, in front of the dark recess, where the sacred relics are deposited, a few desperate, melancholy sinners lay prostrate.

To these I joined myself, and fell down on the steps before the shrine. The sunbeams had not yet penetrated into this religious quarter; and the only light it received proceeded from the golden lamps, which hang in clusters round the sanctuary. A lofty altar, decked with superstitious prodigality, conceals the holy pile from profane glances. Those who are profoundly touched with its sanctity may approach, and walking round, look through the crevices of the tomb, and rub their noses against the identical bones of St. Anthony, which, it is observed, exude a balsamic odour. But supposing a traveller ever so heretical, I would advise him by no means to neglect this pilgrimage; since every part of the recess he visits is decorated with the most exquisite sculptures. Sansovino and the best artists have vied with each other in carving the alto relievos of the arcade, which, for design and execution, would do honour to the sculptors of antiquity.

Having observed these objects with much less exactness than they merited, and acted perhaps too capital a part amongst the devotees, I hastened to the inn, luckily hard by, and one of the best I am acquainted with. Here I soon fell asleep in defiance of sunshine. 'Tis true my slumbers were not a little agitated. St. Anthony had been deaf to my prayer, and I still found myself a frail, infatuated mortal.

At five I got up; we dined, and afterwards, scarcely knowing, nor much caring, what became of us, we strolled to the great hall of the town; an enormous edifice, as large as that of Westminster, but free from stalls, or shops, or nests of litigation. The roof, one spacious vault of brown timber, casts a solemn gloom, which was still increased by the lateness of the hour, and not diminished by the wan light, admitted through the windows of pale blue glass. The size and shape of this colossal chamber, the coving of the roof, with beams like perches for the feathered race, stretching across it, and, above all, the watery gleams that glanced through the casements, possessed my fancy with ideas of Noah's ark, and almost persuaded me I beheld that extraordinary vessel. The representation one sees of it in Scheutzer's "Physica Sacra" seems to be formed upon this very model, and for several moments I indulged the chimera of imagining myself confined within its precincts. How willingly, could I but choose my companions, would I encounter a deluge, to float whole years instead of months upon the waves!

We remained walking to and fro in the ark, till the twilight faded into total darkness. It was then full time to retire, as the guardian of the place was by no means formed to divine our diluvian ideas.

LETTER XII.

September 6th.—At Padua, I was too near the last and one of the most celebrated abodes of Petrarch, to make the omission of a visit excusable; had I not been in a disposition to render such a pilgrimage peculiarly pleasing. I set forwards from Padua after dinner, so as to arrive some time before sunset. Nothing could be finer than the day; and I had every reason to promise myself a serene and delicious hour,

before the sun might go down. I put the poems of Petrarch into my pocket; and, as my road lay chiefly through lanes, planted on either side with mulberries and poplars, from which vines hung dangling in careless festoons, I found many a bowering shade, where I sat, at intervals, to indulge my pensive humour over some ejaculatory sonnet; as the pilgrim, on his journey to Loretto, reposes here and there, to offer his prayers and meditations to the Virgin. In little more than an hour and half, I found myself in the midst of the Euganean hills, and, after winding almost another hour amongst them, I got, before I was well aware, into the village of Arqua. Nothing can be more sequestered or obscure than its situation. It had rather a deserted appearance; several of its houses being destitute of inhabitants, and crumbling into ruins. Two or three of them, however, exhibited ancient towers, richly mantled with ivy, and surrounded with cypress, that retained the air of having once belonged to persons of consideration. Their present abandoned state nourished the melancholy idea with which I entered the village. Could one approach the last retreat of genius, and not look for some glow of its departed splendour?

> "Dear to the pensive eye of fond regret,
> Is light still beaming from a sun that's set."

The residence of Petrarch at Arqua is said to have drawn thither from Padua the society of its more enlightened citizens. This city, whilst Petrarch lived in its neighbourhood, was engaged in rebellion against the Venetians; and Francis de Carrara, the head of it, went often to Arqua, to consult Petrarch; when he found himself obliged to sue to Venice for peace. The poet was indeed deputed, upon this occasion, his ambassador to the state; as being a person whose character and credit were most likely to appease its wrath. His success in this embassy might, perhaps, have been some recompense for an employment he accepted with much regret, as it forced him from his beloved retirement. In a letter to one of his friends, written about this period of his life, he says: "I pass the greatest part of the year in the country, which I have always preferred to cities: I read; I write; I think: thus, my life and my pleasures are like those of youth. I take pains to hide myself; but I cannot escape visits: it is an honour which

displeases and wearies me. In my little house on the Euganean hills, I hope to pass my few remaining days in tranquillity, and to have always before my eyes my dead, or my absent, friends." I was musing on these circumstances as I walked along the village, till a venerable old woman, seated at her door with her distaff in her hand, observing me, soon guessed the cause of my excursion; and offered to guide me to Petrarch's house. The remainder of my way was short, and well amused by my guide's enthusiastic expressions of veneration for the poet's memory; which, she assured me, she felt but in common with the other inhabitants of the village. When we came to the door of the house, we met the peasant, its present possessor. The old woman, recommending the stranger and his curiosity to her neighbour's good offices, departed. I entered immediately, and ran over every room, which the peasant assured me, in confirmation of what I before learnt from better authority, were preserved, as nearly as they could be, in the state Petrarch had left them. The house and premises, having unfortunately been transmitted from one enthusiast of his name to another, no tenants have been admitted, but under the strictest prohibition of making any change in the form of the apartments, or in the memorial relics belonging to the place: and, to say the truth, everything I saw in it, save a few articles of the peasant's furniture in the kitchen, has an authentic appearance. Three of the rooms below stairs are particularly shown, and they have nothing in them but what once belonged to the poet. In one, which I think they call his parlour, is a very antique cupboard; where, it is supposed, he deposited some precious part of his literary treasure. The ceiling is painted in a grotesque manner. A niche in the wall contains the skeleton of his favourite cat, with a Latin epigram beneath, of Petrarch's composition. It is good enough to deserve being copied; but the lateness of the hour did not allow me time. A little room, beyond this, is said to have been his study: the walls of it, from top to bottom, are scribbled over with sonnets, and poetical eulogies on Petrarch, ancient and modern: many of which are subscribed by persons, of distinguished rank and talents, Italians as well as strangers. Here, too, is the bard's old chair, and on it is displayed a great deal of heavy, ornamental carpentry; which required no stretch of faith to be believed the manufacture of the fourteenth century. You may

be sure, I placed myself in it, with much veneration, and the most resigned assent to Mrs. Dobson's relation: that Petrarch, sitting in this same chair, was found dead in his library, with one arm leaning on a book. Who could sit in Petrarch's chair, void of some effect? I rose not from it without a train of pensive sentiments and soft impressions; which I ever love to indulge. I was now led into a larger room, behind that I first saw; where, it is likely enough, the poet, according to the peasant's information, received the visits of his friends. Its walls were adorned with landscapes and pastoral scenes, in such painting as Petrarch himself might, and is supposed to have executed. Void of taste and elegance, either in the design or colouring, they bear some characteristic marks of the age to which they are, with no improbability, assigned; and, separate from the merit of exhibiting repeatedly the portraits of Petrarch and Laura, are a valuable sketch of the rude infancy of the art, where it rose with such hasty vigour to perfection. Having seen all that was left unchanged in this consecrated mansion, I passed through a room, said to have been the bard's bed-room, and stepped into the garden, situated on a green slope, descending directly from the house. It is now rather an orchard than a garden; a spot of small extent, and without much else to recommend it, but that it once was the property of Petrarch. It is not pretended to have retained the form in which he left it. An agreeably wild and melancholy kind of view, which it commands over the Euganean hills, and which I beheld under the calm glow of approaching sunset, must often, at the same moment, have soothed the poet's anxious feelings, and hushed his active imagination, as it did my own, into a delicious repose. Having lingered here till the sun was sunk beneath the horizon, I was led a little way farther in the village, to see Petrarch's fountain. Hippocrene itself could not have been more esteemed by the poet, than this, his gift, by all the inhabitants of Arqua. The spring is copious, clear, and of excellent water; I need not say with what relish I drank of it. The last religious act in my little pilgrimage was a visit to the church-yard; where I strewed a few flowers, the fairest of the season, on the poet's tomb; and departed for Padua by the light of the moon.

LETTER XIII.

September 7th.—Immediately after breakfast, we went to St. Justina's, a noble temple, designed by Palladio, and worthy of his reputation. The dimensions are vast, and the equal distribution of light and ornament truly admirable. Upon my first entrance, the long perspective of domes above, and chequered marble below, struck me with surprise and pleasure. I roved about the spacious aisles for several minutes, then sat down under the grand cupola, and admired the beautiful symmetry of the building.

Both extremities of the cross aisles are terminated by altar and tombs of very remote antiquity, adorned with uncouth sculptures of the Evangelists, supported by wreathed columns of alabaster, round which, to my no small astonishment, four or five gawky fellows were waddling on their knees, persuaded, it seems, that this strange devotion would cure the rheumatism, or any other aches with which they were afflicted. You can have no conception of the ridiculous attitudes into which they threw themselves; nor the difficulty with which they squeezed along, between the middle column of the tomb and those which surrounded it. No criminal in the pillory ever exhibited a more rueful appearance, no swine ever scrubbed itself more fervently than these infatuated lubbers.

I left them hard at work, taking more exercise than had been their lot for many a day; and, mounting into the organ gallery, listened to Turini's * music with infinite satisfaction. The loud harmonious tones of the instrument filled the whole edifice; and, being repeated by the echoes of its lofty domes and arches, produced a wonderful effect. Turini, aware of this circumstance, adapts his compositions with great intelligence to the place, and makes his slave, the organ, send forth the most affecting, long-protracted sounds, which languish in the air, and are some time a-dying. Nothing can be more original than his style. Deprived of sight by an unhappy accident, in the flower of his days, he gave up his entire soul to music, and scarcely exists but through its medium.

When we came out of St. Justina's, the azure of the sky and the softness of the air inclined us to think of some excursion.

* A nephew of Bertoni, and worthy of his uncle.

Where could I wish to go, but to the place in which I had been so delighted? Besides, it was proper to make the C. another visit, and proper to see the Pisani palace, which happily I had before neglected. All these proprieties considered, M. de R. accompanied me to Fiesso.

The sun was just sunk when we arrived; the whole ether in a glow, and the fragrance of the arched citron alleys delightful. Beneath them I walked in the cool, till the Galuzzi began once more her enchanting melody. She sung till the moon tempted the fascinating G——a and myself to stray on the banks of the Brenta. A profound calm reigned upon the woods and the waters, and moonlight added serenity to a scene naturally peaceful. We listened to the faint murmurs of the leaves, and the distant rural noises, observing the gleams that quivered on the river, and discovered a mutual delight in contemplating the same objects.

We supped late: before the Galuzzi had repeated the airs which had most affected me, morning began to dawn.

September 8th.—It was evening, and I was still asleep; not in a tranquil slumber, but at the mercy of fantastic visions. The want of sound repose had thrown me into a feverish impatient mood, that was alone to be subdued by harmony. Scarcely had I snatched some slight refreshment, before I flew to the great organ at St. Justina's, but tried, this time, to compose myself in vain. M. de R., finding my endeavours unsuccessful, proposed, by way of diverting my attention, that we should set out immediately for one of the Euganean hills about five or seven miles from Padua, at the foot of which some antique baths had very lately been discovered. I consented, without hesitation, little concerned whither I went, or what happened to me, provided the scene was often shifted. The lanes and enclosures we passed on our road to the hills, appeared in all the gaiety that verdure, flowers, and sunshine could give them. But my pleasures were overcast, and I beheld every object, however cheerful, through a dusky medium. Deeply engaged in conversation, distance made no impression; and we beheld the meadows, over which the ruins are scattered, lie before us, when we still imagined ourselves several miles away. Had I but enjoyed my former serenity, how agreeably would such a landscape have affected my imagination! How lightly should I not have run over the

herbage, and viewed the irregular shrubby hills, diversified with clumps of cypress, verdant spots, and pastoral cottages, such as Zuccarelli loved to paint! No scene could be more smiling than this which here presented itself, or answer, in a fuller degree, the ideas I had formed of Italy.

Leaving our carriage at the entrance of the mead, we traversed its flowery surface, and shortly perceived among the grass an oblong basin, incrusted with pure white marble. Most of the slabs are large and perfect, apparently brought from Greece, and still retaining their polished smoothness. The pipes to convey the waters are still discernible; in short, the whole ground-plan may be easily traced. Nothing more remains: the pillars and arcades are fallen, and one or two pedestals alone vouch for their former existence. Near the principal bath, we remarked the platforms of several circular apartments, paved with mosaic, in a neat simple taste, far from inelegant. Weeds have not yet sprung up amongst the crevices; and the universal freshness of the ruin shows that it has not been long exposed.

Theodoric is the prince to whom these structures are attributed; and Cassiodorus, the prime chronicler of the country, is quoted to maintain the supposition. My spirit was too much engaged to make any learned parade, or to dispute upon a subject, which I abandon, with all its glories, to calmer and less impatient minds.

Having taken a cursory view of the ruins in the mead, we ascended the hill which borders upon it, and surveyed a prospect of the same nature, though in a more lovely and expanded style, than that which I beheld from Mosolente. Padua crowns the landscape, with its towers and cupolas rising from a continued grove; and, from the drawings I have seen, I should conjecture that Damascus presents somewhat of a similar appearance.

Taking our eyes off this extensive prospect, we turned them to the fragments beneath our feet. The walls appear plainly composed of the *opus reticulatum* so universal in the environs of Naples. A sort of terrace, with the bases of columns circling the mount, leads me to imagine here were formerly arcades and porticos, for enjoying the view; for on the summit I could trace no vestiges of any considerable structure, and am therefore inclined to conclude, that nothing more

than a colonnade surrounded the hill, leading perhaps to some slight fane, or pavilion, for the recreation of the bathers below.

A profusion of aromatic flowers covered the slopes, and exhaled additional perfumes, as the sun declined, and the still hour approached, which was wont to spread over my mind a divine composure, and to restore the tranquillity I might have lost in the day. But now it diffused in vain its reviving coolness, and I remained, if possible, more sad and restless than before.

To produce such a revolution, divine how I must have been fascinated! and be not surprised at my repeating all the way that pathetic sonnet of Petrarch:

> "O giorno, o ora, o ultimo momento,
> O stelle congiurate a 'mpoverirme!
> O fido sguardo, or che volei tu dirme,
> Partend' io, per non esser mai contento?"

September 9th.—You may imagine how I felt when the hour of leaving Padua drew near. It happened to be a high festival, and mass celebrated at the grand church of St. Anthony, with more than ordinary splendour. The music drawing us thither, we found every chapel twinkling with lights, and the choir filled with a vapour of incense. Through its medium several cloth of gold figures discovered themselves, ministering before the altar, and acting their parts with a sacred pomposity, wonderfully imposing. I attended very little to their functions, but the plaintive tones of the voices and instruments, so consonant with my own feelings, melted me into tears, and gave me, no doubt, the exterior of exalted piety. Guadazni sang amongst the other musicians, but seemed to be sinking apace into devotion and obscurity. The ceremony ended, I took leave of M. de R. with sincere regret, and was driven away to Vicenza. Of my journey I scarce know any more than that the evening was cold and rainy, that I shivered and was miserable.

September 10th.—The morning being overcast, I went, full of the spirit of Æschylus, to the Olympic Theatre, and vented my evil temper in reciting some of the most tremendous verses of his furies. The august front of the scene, and its three grand streets of fanes and palaces, inspired me with the

loftiest sentiments of the Grecian drama ; but the dubious light admitted through windows, scarce visible between the rows of statues which crown the entablature, sunk me into fits of gloom and sadness. I mused a long while in the darkest and most retired recess of the edifice, fancying I had penetrated into a real and perfect monument of antiquity, which till this moment had remained undiscovered. It is impossible to conceive a structure more truly classical, or to point out a single ornament which has not the best antique authority. I am not in the least surprised that the citizens of Vicenza enthusiastically gave in to Palladio's plan, and sacrificed large sums to erect so beautiful a model. When finished, they procured, at a vast expense, the representation of a Grecian tragedy, with its chorus and majestic decorations. You can enter into the rapture of an artist, who sees his fondest vision realized ; and can easily conceive how it was, that Palladio esteemed this compliment the most flattering reward. After I had given scope to the fancies which the scene suggested, we set out for Verona.

The situation is striking and picturesque. A long line of battlement walls, flanked by venerable towers, mounts the hill in a grand irregular sweep, and incloses many a woody garden and grove of slender cypress. Beyond rises an awful assembly of mountains ; opposite to which a fertile plain presents itself, decked with all the variety of meads and thickets, olive-grounds and vineyards.

Amongst these our road kept winding till we entered the city gate, and passed (the post knows how many streets and alleys in the way !) to the inn, a lofty, handsome-looking building ; but so full that we were obliged to take up with an apartment on its very summit, open to all the winds, like the magic chamber Apuleius mentions, and commanding the roofs of half Verona. Here and there a pine shot up amongst them, and the shady hills, terminating the perspective with their walls and turrets, formed a romantic scene.

Placing our table in a balcony, to enjoy the prospect with greater freedom, we feasted upon fish from the Lago di Garda, and the delicious fruits of the country,—grapes worthy of Canaan, and peaches such as Eden itself might have gloried in producing. Thus did I remain, solacing myself, breathing the cool air, and remarking the evening tints of the mountains.

VERONA.

VENICE—THE DUCAL PALACE.

Neither the paintings of Count this, nor the antiquities of the Marquis t'other, could tempt me from my aërial situation; I refused hunting out the famous Paolos scattered over the town, and sat like the owl in the Georgics,

"Solis et occasum servans de culmine summo."

Twilight drawing on, I left my haunt, and stealing downstairs, inquired for a guide to conduct me to the amphitheatre, perhaps the most entire monument of Roman days. The people of the house, instead of bringing me a quiet peasant, officiously delivered me up to a professed antiquary, one of those diligent plausible young men, to whom, God help me! I have so capital an aversion. This sweet spark displayed all his little erudition, and flourished away upon cloacas and vomitoriums with eternal fluency. He was very profound in the doctrine of conduits, and knew to admiration how the filthiness of all the amphitheatre was disposed of; but perceiving my inattention, and having just grace enough to remark that I chose one side of the street when he preferred the other, and sometimes trotted through despair in the kennel, he made me a pretty bow, I threw him half-a-crown, and seeing the ruins before me, traversed a gloomy arcade and emerged alone into the arena. A smooth turf covers its surface, from which a spacious row of gradines rises to a majestic elevation. Four arches, with their simple Doric ornament, alone remain of the grand circle which once lifted itself above the highest seats of the amphitheatre; and, had it not been for Gothic violence, this part of the structure would have equally resisted the ravages of time. Nothing can be more exact than the preservation of the gradines; not a block has sunk from its place, and whatever trifling injuries they may have received have been carefully repaired. The two chief entrances are rebuilt with solidity and closed by portals, no passage being permitted through the theatre except at public shows and representations, sometimes still given in the arena.

When I paced slowly across it, silence reigned undisturbed amongst the awful ruins, and nothing moved, save the weeds and grasses which skirt the walls and tremble with the faintest breeze.

I liked the idea of being thus shut in on every side by endless gradines, abandoned to a stillness and solitude I was

so peculiarly disposed to taste. Throwing myself upon the grass in the middle of the arena, I enjoyed the freedom of my situation; and pursued the last tracks of light, as they faded behind the solitary arches, which rose above the rest. Red and fatal were the tints of the western sky; the wind blew chill and hollow, and something more than common seemed to issue from the withering herbage on the walls. I started up, fled through a dark arcade, where water falls drop by drop, and arrived, panting, in the great square before the ruins. Directing my steps across it, I reached an ancient castle, once inhabited by the Scaligeri, sovereigns of Verona. Hard by appeared the ruins of a triumphal arch, which most antiquarians ascribe to Vitruvius, enriched with delicate scrolls and flowery ornaments. I could have passed half-an-hour very agreeably in copying these elegant sculptures; but night covering them with her shades, I returned home to the Corso; where the outlines of several palaces, designed by Michel San Michele, attracted my attention. But it was too dusky to examine their details.

September 11th.—Traversing once more the grand piazza, and casting a last glance upon the amphitheatre, we passed under a lofty arch which terminates the perspective, and left Verona by a wide, irregular, picturesque street, commanding, whenever you look back, a striking scene of towers, cypress, and mountains.

The country, between this beautiful town and Mantua, presents one continued grove of dwarfish mulberries, among which start up innumerable barren hills. Now and then a knot of poplars diversify their craggy summits, and sometimes a miserable shed. Mantua itself rises out of a morass formed by the Mincio, whose course, in most places, is so choked up with reeds as to be scarcely discernible. It requires a creative imagination to discover any charms in such a prospect, and a strong prepossession not to be disgusted with the scene where Virgil was born. For my own part, I approached this neighbourhood with proper deference, and began to feel the God, but finding no tufted tree on which I could suspend my lyre, or verdant bank which invited to repose, I abandoned poetry and entered the city in despair.

The beating of drums, and sight of German whiskers, finished what croaking frogs and stagnant ditches had begun.

Every classic idea being scared by such sounds and such objects, I dined in dudgeon, and refused stirring out till late in the evening.

A few paces from the town stand the remains of the palace where the Gonzagas formerly resided. This I could not resist looking at, and was amply rewarded. Several of the apartments, adorned by the bold pencil of Julio Romano, merit the most exact attention ; and the grotesques, with which the stucco ceilings are covered, equal the celebrated loggios of the Vatican. I don't recollect ever having seen these elegant designs engraven, and believe it would be perfectly worth the pains of some capital artist to copy them. Being in fresco upon damp neglected walls, each year diminishes their number, and every winter moulders some beautiful figure away.

The subjects, mostly from antique fables, are treated with all the purity and gracefulness of Raphael. Amongst others the story of Polypheme is very conspicuous. Acis appears, reclined with his beloved Galatea, on the shore of the ocean, whilst their gigantic enemy, seated above on the brow of Ætna, seems by the paleness and horrors of his countenance to meditate some terrible revenge.

When it was too late to examine the paintings any longer, I walked into a sort of court, or rather garden, which had been decorated with fountains and antique statues. Their fragments still remain amongst weeds and beds of flowers, for every corner of the place is smothered with vegetation. Here nettles grow thick and rampant: there, tuberoses and jessamine cling around mounds of ruins, which during the elegant reign of the Gonzagas led to grottos and subterranean apartments, concealed from vulgar eyes, and sacred to the most refined enjoyments. I gathered a tuberose that sprang from a shell of white marble, once trickling with water, now half filled with mould, and carrying it home, shut myself up for the rest of the night, inhaled its perfume, and fell a-dreaming.

September 12th.—A shower having fallen, the air was refreshed, and the drops still glittered upon the vines, through which our road conducted us. Three or four miles from Mantua the scene changed to extensive grounds of rice, and meads of the tenderest verdure watered by springs, whose frequent meanders gave to the whole prospect the appearance of a vast green carpet shot with silver. Further on we crossed

the Po, and passing Guastalla, entered a woody country full of inclosures and villages; herds feeding in the meadows, and poultry parading before every wicket.

The peasants were busied in winnowing their corn; or, mounted upon the elms and poplars, gathering the rich clusters from the vines that hang streaming in braids from one branch to another. I was surprised to find myself already in the midst of the vintage, and to see every road crowded with carts and baskets bringing it along; you cannot imagine a pleasanter scene.

Round Reggio it grew still more lively, and on the other side of that agreeable little city, I remarked many a cottage that Tityrus might have inhabited, with its garden and willow hedge in flower, swarming with bees. Our road, the smoothest conceivable, led us, perhaps too rapidly, by so cheerful a landscape. I caught glimpses of fields and copses as we fled along, that could have afforded me amusement for hours, and orchards on gentle acclivities, beneath which I could have walked till evening. The trees literally bent under their loads of fruit, and innumerable ruddy apples lay scattered upon the ground—

"Strata jacent passim sua quæque sub arbore poma."

Beyond these rich masses of foliage, to which the sun lent additional splendour, at the utmost extremity of the pastures, rose the irregular ridge of the Apennines, whose deep blue presented a striking contrast to the glowing colours of the foreground. I fixed my eyes on the chain of distant mountains, and indulged, as usual, my conjectures of what was going forward on their summits; of those who tended goats on the edge of the precipice; traversed, at this moment, the dark thickets of pines, and passed their lives in yonder sheds, contented and unknown. Such were the dreams that filled my fancy, and kept it incessantly employed till it was dusk, and the moon began to show herself; the same moon which, but a few days ago, had seen me so happy at Fiesso. Her soft light reposed upon the meads, that had been newly mown, and the shadows of tall poplars were cast aslant them. I left my carriage, and running into the dim haze, abandoned myself to the recollection it inspired. During an hour, I kept continually flying forwards; bounding from enclosure to enclosure like a hunted antelope, and forgetting where I was or whither I was

BOLOGNA.

going. One sole idea filled my mind, and led me on with such heedless rapidity, that I stumbled over stones and bushes, and entangled myself on every wreath of vines which opposed my progress. At length, having wandered where chance or the wildness of my fancy led, till the lateness of the evening alarmed me, I regained the chaise as fast as I could, and arrived between ten and eleven at the place of my destination.

September 13th.—Having but a moment or two at liberty, I hurried early in the morning to the palace, and entered an elegant Ionic court, with arcades of the whitest stone, through which I caught peeps of a clear blue sky and groves of cypresses. Some few good paintings still adorn the apartments, but the best part of the collection has been disposed of, for a hundred thousand sequins, amongst which was that inestimable picture, the Notte of Corregio. An excellent copy remained and convinced me the original was not undeservedly celebrated. None but the pencil of Corregio ever designed such graceful angels, nor imagined such a pearly dawn to cast around them. Ten thousand times, I dare say, has the subject of the Nativity been treated, and as many painters have failed in rendering it so pleasing. The break of day, the first smiles of the celestial infant, and the truth, the simplicity of every countenance, cannot be too warmly admired. In the other rooms, no picture gave me more pleasure than Jacob's Vision by Domenico Feti. I gazed several minutes at the grand confusion of clouds and seraphim descending around the patriarch, and wished for a similar dream.

Having spent the little time I had remaining in contemplating this object, I hastened from the palace and left Modena.

We traversed a champagne country in our way to Bologna, whose richness and fertility increased in proportion as we drew near that celebrated mart of lap-dogs and sausages. A chain of hills commands the city, variegated with green inclosures and villas innumerable, almost every one of which has its grove of chestnuts and cypresses. On the highest acclivity of this range appears the magnificent convent of Madonna del Monte, embosomed in wood, and joined to the town by a corridor a league in length. This vast portico, ascending the steeps and winding amongst the thickets, sometimes concealed and sometimes visible, produces an effect wonderfully grand and singular.

I longed to have mounted the height by so extraordinary a passage; and hope on some future day to be better acquainted with Saint Maria del Monte.

At present I thought of little else, to say truth, but what I had seen at Fiesso; and what I was to hear at Lucca. The anxiety inspired by the one, and impatience by the other, rendered me shamefully insensible to the merits of Bologna (where I passed near two hours), and of which I can add nothing but that it is very much out of humour, an earthquake and Cardinal Buoncompagni having disarranged both land and people. For half-a-year the ground continued trembling; and for these last months, the legate and senators have grumbled and scratched incessantly; so that, between natural and political commotions, the Bolognese must have passed an agreeable summer.

Such a report of the situation of things, you may suppose, was not likely to retard my journey. I put off delivering my letters to another opportunity; ran up a tall slender tower as high as the Campanile di San Marco, by way of exercise; and proceeded immediately after dinner towards the mountains. We were soon in the midst of crags and stony channels, that stream with ten thousand rills in the winter season, but during the summer months reflect every sunbeam, and harbour half the scorpions in the country.

For many a toilsome league our prospect consisted of nothing but dreary hillocks and intervening wastes, more barren and mournful than those to which Mary Magdalene retired. Sometimes a crucifix or chapel peeped out of the parched fern and grasses, with which these desolate fields are clothed; and now and then we met a goggle-eyed pilgrim trudging along, and staring about him as if he waited only for night and opportunity to have additional reasons for hurrying to Jerusalem.

During three or four hours that we continued ascending, the scene increased in sterility and desolation; but, at the end of our second post, the landscape began to alter for the better: little green valleys at the base of tremendous steeps, discovered themselves, scattered over with oaks, and freshened with running waters, which the nakedness of the impending rocks set off to advantage. The sides of the cliffs in general consist of rude misshapen masses; but their summits are smooth

and verdant, and continually browsed by herds of white goats, which were gambolling on the edge of the precipices as we passed beneath.

I joined one of these frisking assemblies, whose shadows were stretched by the setting sun along the level herbage. There I sat a few minutes whilst they shook their beards at me, and tried to scare me with all their horns; but I was not to be frightened, and would offer up my adorations to departing day, in spite of their caperings. Being tired with skipping and butting at me in vain, the whole herd trotted away, and I after them. They led me a dance from crag to crag and from thicket to thicket.

It was growing dusky apace, and wreaths of smoke began to ascend from the mysterious depths of the valleys. I was ignorant what monster inhabited such retirements, so gave over my pursuit, lest some Polypheme or other might make me repent it. I looked around, the carriage was out of sight; but hearing the neighing of horses at a distance, I soon came up with them, and mounted another rapid ascent, whence an extensive tract of cliff and forest land was discernible.

The rocks here formed a spacious terrace; along which I continued surveying the distant groves, and marking the solemn approach of night. The sky was hung with storms, and a pale moon seemed to advance with difficulty amongst broken and tempestuous clouds. It was an hour to reap plants with brazen sickles, and to meditate upon revenge.

A chill wind blew from the highest peak of the Apennines, inspiring evil, and making a dismal rustle amongst the woods of chestnut that hung on the mountain's side, through which we were forced to pass. I never heard such fatal murmurs; nor felt myself so gloomily. I walked out of the sound of the carriage, where the glimmering moonlight prevailed, and began interpreting the language of the leaves, not greatly to my own advantage or that of any being in the universe. I was no prophet of good, but full of melancholy bodings, and something that bordered upon despair. Had I but commanded an oracle, as ancient visionaries were wont, I should have thrown whole nations into dismay.

How long I continued in this strange temper I cannot pretend to say, but believe it was midnight before we emerged from the oracular forest, and saw faintly before us the huts of

Lognone, where we were to sleep. This blessed hamlet is suspended on the brow of a bleak mountain, and every gust that stirs shakes the whole village to its foundations. At our approach two hags stalked forth with lanterns and invited us with a grin, which I shall always remember, to a dish of mustard and crow's gizzards, a dish I was more than half afraid of tasting, lest it should change me to some bird of darkness, condemned to mope eternally on the black rafters of the cottage.

After repeated supplications we procured a few eggs, and some faggots to make a fire. Its blaze gave me courage to hear the hollow blasts that whistled in the crevices; and pitching my bed in a warm corner, I soon fell asleep, and forgot all my cares and inquietudes.

September 14th.—The sun had not been long above the horizon, before we set forward upon a craggy pavement hewn out of the rough bosom of the cliffs and precipices. Scarce a tree was visible, and the few that presented themselves began already to shed their leaves. The raw nipping air of this desert with difficulty spares a blade of vegetation; and in the whole range of these extensive eminences I could not discover a single corn-field or pasture. Inhabitants, you may guess, there were none. I would defy even a Scotch highlander to find means of subsistence in so rude a soil.

Towards midday, we had surmounted the dreariest part of our journey, and began to perceive a milder landscape. The climate improved as well as the prospect, and after a continual descent of several hours, we saw groves and villages in the dips of the hills, and met a string of mules and horses laden with fruit. I purchased some figs and peaches from this little caravan, and spreading my repast upon a bank, baked in the sunshine, and gathered large spikes of lavender in full bloom.

Continuing our route, we bid adieu to the realms of poverty and barrenness, and entered a cultivated vale sheltered by woody acclivities. Among these we wound along, the peasants singing upon the hill, and driving their cattle to springs by the road's side; near one of which we dined in a patriarchal manner, and afterwards pursued our course through a grove of taper cypresses, waving with the cool gales of the evening. The heights were suffused with a ruddy glow, proceeding from

the light pink clouds which floated on the horizon. No others were to be seen. All nature seemed in a happy tranquil state; the herds penned in their folds, and every rustic going to repose. I shared the general calm for the first time this many a tedious hour; and traversed the dales in peace, abandoned to flattering hopes and gay illusions. The full moon shone propitiously upon me as I ascended a hill, and discovered Florence at a distance, surrounded with gardens and terraces, rising one above another. The serene moonlight on the pale grey tints of the olive, gave an Elysian, visionary appearance to the landscape. I never beheld so mild a sky, nor such soft gleams: the mountains were veiled in azure mists, which concealed their rugged summits; and the plains in vapours, that smoothed their irregularities, and diffused a faint aërial hue, to which no description can render justice. I could have contemplated such scenery for hours, and was sorry when I found myself shut up from it by the gates of Florence. We passed several lofty palaces of the true Tuscan order, with rustic arcades and stout columns, whose solidity and magnificence were not diminished by the shades of midnight. Whilst these grand masses lay dark and solemn, the smooth flagstone, with which every street is paved, received a chequered gleam, and the Arno, the brightest radiance. Though tired with my jumble over the Apennines, I could not resist the temptation of walking upon the banks of so celebrated a river, and crossing its bridges, which still echoed with music and conversation. Having gratified the first impulse of curiosity, I returned to Vaninis, and slept as well as my impatience would allow, till it was time next morning (September 15th), to visit the gallery, and worship the Venus de Medicis. I felt, upon entering this world of taste and elegance, as if I could have taken up my abode in it for ever; but confused with the multitude of objects, I knew not where to turn myself, and ran childishly by the ample ranks of sculptures, like a butterfly in a parterre, that skims before it fixes, over ten thousand flowers.

Having taken my course down one side of the gallery, I turned the angle and discovered another long perspective, equally stored with prodigies of bronze and marble; paintings on the walls, on the ceilings, in short, everywhere. A minute brought me, vast as it was, to the extremity of this range; then, flying down a third, adorned in the same delightful

manner, I paused under the bust of Jupiter Olympius; and began to reflect a little more maturely upon the company in which I found myself. Opposite, appeared the majestic features of Minerva, breathing divinity; and Cybele, the mother of the gods.

I bowed low to these awful powers, but seeing a black figure just by, whose attitude seemed to announce the deity of sleep, I made immediately up to it. You know my fondness for this drowsy personage, and that it is not the first time I have quitted the most splendid society for him. I found him, at present, of touchstone, with the countenance of a towardly brat, sleeping ill through indigestion. The artist had not conceived such high ideas of the god as live in my bosom, or else he never would have represented him with so little grace or dignity.

Displeased at finding my favourite subject profaned, I perceived the lively transports of enthusiasm began in some degree to be dissipated, and I felt myself calm enough to follow the herd of guides and spectators from chamber to chamber and cabinet to cabinet, without falling into errors of rapture and inspiration. We were led slowly and moderately through the large rooms, containing the portraits of painters, good, bad, and indifferent, from Raffaelle to Liotard; then into a museum of bronzes, which would afford both amusement and instruction for years.

To one who can never behold an ancient lamp or tripod without the associations of those who sacrificed on the one and meditated by the other, imagine what pleasures such a repository must have communicated.

When I had alarmed, not satisfied, my curiosity by rapidly running over this multitude of candelabra, urns, and sacred utensils, we entered a small luminous apartment, surrounded with cases richly decorated, and filled with the most exquisite models of workmanship in bronze and various metals, classed in exact order. Here are crowds of diminutive deities and tutelary lars, to whom the superstition of former days attributed those midnight murmurs which were believed to presage the misfortunes of a family. Amongst these now neglected images are preserved a vast number of talismans, cabalistic amulets, and other grotesque relics of ancient credulity.

In the centre of the room, I remarked a table, beautifully

formed of polished gems, and, hard by it, the statue of a genius with his familiar serpent, and all his attributes; the guardian of the treasured antiquities. From this chamber we were conducted into another, which opens to that part of the gallery where the busts of Adrian and Antinous are placed. Two pilasters, delicately carved in trophies and clusters of ancient armour, stand on each side of the entrance; within are several perfumed cabinets of miniatures, and a single column of Oriental alabaster about ten feet in height,

"Lucido e terso, e bianco, più che latte."

I put my guide's patience to the proof, by remaining much longer than any one else ever did, in admiring the pillar, and rummaging the drawers of the cabinets. At last, the musk with which they are impregnated obliged me to desist, and I moved on to a suite of saloons, with low arched roofs, glittering with arabesque, in azure and gold. Several medallions appear amongst the wreaths of foliage, tolerably well painted, with representations of splendid feasts and tournaments for which Florence was once so famous.

A vast collection of small pictures, most of them Flemish, covers the walls of these apartments. But nothing struck me more than a Medusa's head by that surprising genius Leonardo da Vinci. It appears just severed from the body, and cast on the damp pavement of a cavern: a deadly paleness covers the countenance, and the mouth exhales a pestilential vapour: the snakes, which fill almost the whole picture, beginning to untwist their folds; one or two seemed already crept away, and crawling up the rock in company with toads and other venomous reptiles.

The colouring of these disgustful objects is faithful to a great degree; the effect of light, prodigious; the whole so masterly that I could not help entering into this description; though I fear to little purpose, as words at best convey but a weak idea of objects addressed to the sight alone.

Here are a grea tmany Polemburgs: one in particular, the strangest I ever beheld. Instead of those soft scenes of woods and waterfalls he is in general so fond of representing, he has chosen for his subject Virgil ushering Dante into the regions of eternal punishment, amidst the ruins of flaming edifices that glare across the infernal waters. These mournful towers

harbour innumerable shapes, all busy in preying upon the damned. One capital devil, in the form of an enormous lobster, seems very strenuously employed in mumbling a miserable mortal, who sprawls, though in vain, to escape from his claws. This performance, whimsical as it is, retains all that softness of tint and delicacy of pencil for which Polemburg is so renowned.

Had not the subject so palpably contradicted the execution as to become remarkable, I should have passed it over, like a thousand more, and brought you immediately to the Tribune. I dare say our sensations were similar on entering this apartment. Need I say I was enchanted the moment I set my feet within it, and saw full before me the Venus de Medicis? The warm ivory hue of the original marble is a beauty no copy has ever imitated, and the softness of the limbs exceeded the liveliest idea I had formed to myself of their perfection.

Their symmetry every artist is acquainted with; but do you recollect a faint ruddy cast in the hair, which admirably relieves the whiteness of the forehead? This circumstance, though perhaps accidental, struck me as peculiarly charming; it increased the illusion, and helped me to imagine I beheld a breathing divinity.

When I had taken my eyes reluctantly from this beautiful object, I cast them upon a Morpheus of white marble, which lies slumbering at the feet of the goddess in the form of a graceful child. A dormant lion serves him for a pillow: two ample wings, carved with the utmost delicacy, are gathered under him; two others, budding from his temples, half concealed by a flow of lovely ringlets. His languid hands scarce hold a bunch of poppies: near him creeps a lizard, just yielding to his influence. Nothing can be more just than the expression of sleep in the countenance of the little divinity. His lion too seems perfectly lulled, and rests his muzzle upon his fore-paws as quiet as a domestic mastiff. I contemplated the god with infinite satisfaction, till I felt an agreeable sleepiness steal over my senses, and should have liked very well to doze away a few hours by his side. My ill-humour at seeing this deity so grossly sculptured in the gallery, was dissipated by the gracefulness of his appearance in the Tribune. I was now contented, for the artist, (to whom the Lord give a fair seat in paradise!) had realized my ideas; and, if I may venture

my opinion, sculpture never arrived to higher perfection, or, at the same time, kept more justly within its province. Sleeping figures with me always produce the finest illusion. I easily persuade myself that I behold the very personage, cast into the lethargic state which is meant to be represented, and I can gaze whole hours upon them with complacency. But when I see an archer in the very act of discharging his arrow, a dancer with one foot in the air, or a gladiator extending his fist to all eternity, I grow tired, and ask, When will they perform what they are about? When will the bow twang? the foot come to the ground? or the fist meet its adversary? Such wearisome attitudes I can view with admiration, but never with pleasure. The wrestlers, for example, in the same apartment, filled me with disgust: I cried out, For heaven's sake! give the throw, and have done. In taking my turn round the enchanted circle, I discovered still another Morpheus; stretched carelessly on a mantle, with poppies in his hands; but no wings grow from his temples, nor lion supports his head. A moth just issuing from his chrysalis is the only being which seems to have felt his soporific influence; whereas the other god I have mentioned may vaunt the glory of subduing the most formidable of animals.

The morning was gone before I could snatch myself from the Tribune. In my way home, I looked into the cathedral, an enormous fabric, inlaid with the richest marbles, and covered with stars and chequered work, like an old-fashioned cabinet. The architect seems to have turned his building inside out; nothing in art being more ornamented than the exterior, and few churches so simple within. The nave is vast and solemn, the dome amazingly spacious, with the high altar in its centre, inclosed by a circular arcade near two hundred feet in diameter. There is something imposing in this decoration, as it suggests the idea of a sanctuary, into which none but the holy ought to penetrate. However profane I might feel myself, I took the liberty of entering, and sat myself down in a niche. Not a ray of light reaches this sacred inclosure, but through the medium of narrow windows, high in the dome and richly painted. A sort of yellow tint predominates, which gives additional solemnity to the altar, and paleness to the votary before it. I was sensible of the effect, and obtained at least the colour of sanctity.

Having remained some time in this pious hue, I returned home and feasted upon grapes and ortolans with great edification; then walked to one of the bridges across the Arno, and surveyed the hills at a distance, purpled by the declining sun. Its mild beams tempted me to the garden of Boboli, which lies behind the Palazzo Pitti, stretched out on the side of a mountain. I ascended terrace after terrace, robed by a thick underwood of bay and myrtle, above which rise several nodding towers, and a long sweep of venerable wall, almost entirely concealed by ivy. You would have been enraptured with the broad masses of shade and dusky alleys that opened as I advanced, with white statues of fauns and sylvans glimmering amongst them; some of which pour water into sarcophagi of the purest marble, covered with antique relievos. The capitals of columns and ancient friezes are scattered about as seats.

On these I reposed myself, and looked up to the cypress groves spiring above the thickets; then, plunging into their retirements, I followed a winding path, which led me by a series of steep ascents to a green platform overlooking the whole extent of wood, with Florence deep beneath, and the tops of the hills which encircle it, jagged with pines; here and there a convent, or villa, whitening in the sun. This scene extends as far as the eye can reach.

Still ascending I attained the brow of the mountain, and had nothing but the fortress of Belvedere, and two or three open porticos above me. On this elevated situation, I found several walks of trellis-work, clothed with luxuriant vines, that produce to my certain knowledge the most delicious clusters. A colossal statue of Ceres, her hands extended in the act of scattering fertility over the prospect, crowns the summit, where I lingered to mark the landscape fade, and the bright skirts of the western sun die gradually away.

Then descending alley after alley, and bank after bank, I came to the orangery in front of the palace, disposed in a grand amphitheatre, with marble niches relieved by dark foliage, out of which spring tall aërial cypresses. This spot brought the scenery of an antique Roman garden full into my mind. I expected every instant to be called to the table of Lucullus hard by, in one of the porticoes, and to stretch myself on his purple triclinias; but waiting in vain for a summons till

the approach of night, I returned delighted with a ramble that had led me so far into antiquity.

Friday, September 16th.—My impatience to hear Pacchierotti called me up with the sun. I blessed a day which was to give me the greatest of musical pleasures, and travelled gaily towards Lucca, along a fertile plain, bounded by rocky hills, and scattered over with towns and villages. We passed Pistoia in haste, and about three in the afternoon entered the Lucchese territory, by a clean, paved road, which runs through some of the pleasantest copses imaginable, bordered with a variety of heaths and broom in blossom. Sometimes it conducted us down slopes, overgrown with shrubby chestnuts and arbor vitæ; sometimes between groves of cypresses and pines laden with cones: a red soil peeping forth from the vegetation adds to the richness of the landscape, which swells all the way into gentle acclivities: and at about seven or eight miles from the city spreads into mountains, green to their very summits, and diversified with gardens and palaces. A more pleasing scenery can with difficulty be imagined: I was quite charmed with beholding it, as I knew very well that the opera would keep me a long while chained down in its neighbourhood.

Happy for me that the environs of Lucca were so beautiful; since I defy almost any city to contain more ugliness within its walls. Narrow streets and dismal alleys; wide gutters and cracked pavements; everybody in black, like mourners for the gloom of their habitations, which, however, are large and lofty enough of conscience; but having all grated windows, they convey none but dark and dungeon-like ideas. My spirits fell many degrees upon entering this sable capital; and when I found Friday was meagre day, in every sense of the word, with its inhabitants, and no opera to be performed, I grew terribly out of humour, and shut myself up in a chamber of the inn, which, to complete my misfortune, was crowded with human lumber. Instead of a delightful symphony, I heard nothing for some time but the clatter of plates and the swearing of waiters.

Amongst the number of my tormentors was a whole Genoese family of distinction; very fat and sleek, and terribly addicted to the violin. Hearing of my fondness for music, they speedily got together a few scrapers, and began such an academia as drove me to one end of the room, whilst they possessed the

other. The hopes and heir of the family—a coarse chubby dolt of about eighteen—played out of all time, and during the interval of repose he gave his elbow, burst out into a torrent of commonplace, which completed, you may imagine, my felicity.

Pacchierotti, whom they all worshipped in their heavy way, sat silent the while in a corner; the second soprano warbled, not absolutely ill, at the harpsichord; whilst the old lady, young lady, and attendant females, kept ogling him with great perseverance. Those who could not get in, squinted through the crevices of the door. Abbés and greyhounds were fidgeting continually without. In short, I was so worried that, pleading headaches and lassitudes, I escaped about ten o'clock, and shook myself when I got safe to my apartment, like a spaniel just fresh from a dripping copse.

LETTER XIV.

LUCCA, *September 25th.*

You ask me how I pass my time. Generally upon the hills, in wild spots where the arbutus flourishes: from whence I may catch a glimpse of the distant sea; my horse tied to a cypress, and myself cast upon the grass, like Palmarin of Oliva, with a tablet and pencil in my hand, a basket of grapes by my side, and a crooked stick to shake down the chestnuts. I have bidden adieu, several days ago, to the dinners and glories of the town, and only come thither in an evening, just time enough for the grand march which precedes Pacchierotti in *Quinto Fabio.* Sometimes he accompanies me in my excursions, to the utter discontent of the Lucchese, who swear I shall ruin their opera, by leading him such confounded rambles amongst the mountains, and exposing him to the inclemency of winds and showers. One day they made a vehement remonstrance, but in vain; for the next, away we trotted over hill and dale, and stayed so late in the evening, that cold and hoarseness were the consequence.

The whole republic was thrown into commotion, and some of its prime ministers were deputed to harangue Pacchierotti upon the rides he had committed. Billingsgate never produced such furious orators. Had the safety of their mighty state

depended upon this imprudent excursion, they could not have vociferated with greater violence. You know I am rather energetic, and, to say truth, I had very nearly got into a scrape of importance, and drawn down the execrations of the Gonfalonier and all his council upon my head, in defending him, and in openly declaring our intention of taking, next morning, another ride over the rocks, and absolutely losing ourselves in the clouds which veil their acclivities. These threats were put into execution, and yesterday we made a tour of about thirty miles upon the highlands, and visited a variety of castles and palaces.

The Conte Nobili conducted us, a noble Lucchese, but born in Flanders and educated at Paris. He possesses the greatest elegance of imagination, and a degree of sensibility rarely met with upon our gross planet. The way did not appear tedious in such company. The sun was tempered by light clouds, and a soft autumnal haze rested upon the hills, covered with shrubs and olives. The distant plains and forests appeared tinted with deep blue, and I am now convinced the azure so prevalent in Velvet Breughel's landscapes is not exaggerated.

After riding for six or seven miles along the cultivated levels, we began to ascend a rough slope, overgrown with chestnuts; here and there some vines streaming in garlands displayed their clusters. A great many loose fragments and stumps of ancient pomegranates perplexed our route, which continued, turning and winding through this sort of wilderness, till it opened on a sudden to the side of a lofty mountain, covered with tufted groves, amongst which hangs the princely castle of the Garzonis, on the very side of a precipice.

Alcina could not have chosen a more romantic situation. The garden lies extended beneath, gay with flowers, and glittering with compartments of spar, which, though in no great purity of taste, has an enchanted effect for the first time. Two large marble basins, with jet-d'eaux seventy feet in height, divide the parterres; from the extremity of which rises a rude cliff, shaded with firs and ilex, and cut into terraces.

Leaving our horses at the great gate of this magic inclosure, we passed through the spray of the fountains, and mounting an almost endless flight of steps, entered an alley of

oranges, and gathered ripe fruit from the trees. Whilst we were thus employed, the sun broke from the clouds, and lighted up the vivid green of the vegetation; at the same time spangling the waters, which pour copiously down a succession of rocky terraces, and sprinkle the impending citron-trees with perpetual dew. These streams issue from a chasm in the cliff, surrounded by cypresses, which conceal by their thick branches some pavilions with baths. Above arises a colossal statue of Fame, boldly carved, and in the very act of starting from the precipices. A narrow path leads up to the feet of the goddess, on which I reclined; whilst a vast column of water arched over my head, and fell, without even wetting me with its spray, into the depths below.

I could with difficulty prevail upon myself to abandon this cool recess, which the fragrance of bay and orange, extracted by constant showers, rendered uncommonly luxurious. At last I consented to move on, through a dark wall of ilex, which, to the credit of Signor Garzoni be it spoken, is suffered to grow as wild and as forest-like as it pleases. This grove is suspended on the mountain side, whose summit is clothed with a boundless wood of olives, and forms, by its azure colour, a striking contrast with the deep verdure of its base.

After resting a few moments in the shade, we proceeded to a long avenue (bordered by aloes in bloom, forming majestic pyramids of flowers thirty feet high), which led us to the palace. This was soon run over. Then, mounting our horses, we wound amongst sunny vales, and inclosures with myrtle hedges, till we came to a rapid steep. We felt the heat most powerfully in ascending it, and were glad to take refuge under a bower of vines, which runs for miles along its summit, almost without interruption. These arbours afforded us both shade and refreshment; I fell upon the clusters which formed our ceiling, like a native of the north, unused to such luxuriance: one of those Goths which Gray so poetically describes, who

> "Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
> And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows."

I wish you had journeyed with us under this fruitful

canopy, and observed the partial sunshine through its transparent leaves, and the glimpses of the blue sky it every now and then admitted. I say only every now and then, for in most places a sort of verdant gloom prevailed, exquisitely agreeable in so hot a day.

But such luxury did not last, you may suppose, for ever. We were soon forced from our covert, and obliged to traverse a mountain exposed to the sun, which had dispersed every cloud, and shone with intolerable brightness. On the other side of this extensive eminence lies an agreeable hillock, surrounded by others, woody and irregular. Wide vineyards and fences of Indian corn lay between, across which the Conte Nobili conducted us to his house, where we found prepared a very comfortable dinner. We drank the growth of the spot, and defied Constantia and the Cape to excel it.

Afterwards, retiring into a wood of the Marchese Mansi, with neat pebble walks and trickling rivulets, we sipped coffee and loitered till sunset. It was then time to return: the dews began to fall, and the mists to rise from the valleys. The profound calm and silence of evening threw us all three into our reveries. We went pacing along heedlessly, just as our horses pleased, without hearing any sound but their steps.

Between nine and ten we entered the gates of Lucca. Pacchierotti coughed, and half its inhabitants wished us at the devil.

I think now I have detained you long enough with my excursions: you must require a little repose; for my own part, I am heartily tired. I intended to say some things about certain owls, amongst other grievances I am pestered with in this republic; but shall cut them all short, and wish you good-night; for the opera is already begun, and I would not miss the first glorious recitative for the empire of Trebizond.

LETTER XV.

LIVOURNO, *October 2nd.*

No sooner were we beyond the gates, than we found ourselves in narrow roads, shut in by vines and grassy banks of canes and osiers, rising high above our carriage, and waving

their leaves in the air. Through the openings which sometimes intervene we discovered a variety of hillocks clothed with shrubberies and verdure, ruined towers looking out of the bushes, not one without a romantic tale attending it.

This sort of scenery lasted till, passing the baths, we beheld Pisa rising from an extensive plain, the most open we had as yet seen in Italy, crossed by an aqueduct. We were set down immediately before the Duomo, which stands insulated in a verdant opening, and is by far the most curious and highly finished edifice my eyes ever viewed. Don't ask of what shape or architecture; it is almost impossible to tell, so great is the confusion of ornaments. The capitals of the columns and carvings of the architraves, as well as the form of the arches, are evidently of Grecian design, but Gothic proportions. The dome gives the mass an Oriental appearance, which helped to bewilder me; in short, I have dreamed of such buildings, but little thought they existed. On one side you survey the famous tower, as perfectly awry as I expected; on the other the baptistery, a circular edifice distinct from the church and right opposite its principal entrance, crowded with sculptures and topped by the strangest of cupolas.

Having indulged our curiosity with this singular prospect for some moments, we entered the cathedral and admired the stately columns of porphyry and the rarest marbles, supporting a roof which, like the rest of the building, shines with gold. A pavement of the brightest mosaic completes its magnificence: all around are sculptures by M. Ang. Buonaroti, and paintings by the most distinguished artists. We examined them all, and then walked down the nave and remarked the striking effect of the baptistery, seen in perspective through the bronze portals, which you know, I suppose, are covered with relievos of the finest workmanship. These noble valves were thrown wide open, and we passed between to examine the alabaster fount in the baptistery, constructed after the primitive ritual, and exquisitely wrought. Many palm trees appear amongst the carved work, which seems to indicate the former connections of the Pisanese with Palestine.

Our next object was the Campo Santo, which forms one side of the opening in which the cathedral is situated. The walls, and Gothic tabernacle above the entrance, rising from a level turf, appear as fresh as if built within the present century,

and, preserving a neat straw colour, have the cleanest effect imaginable. Our guide unlocking the gates, we entered a spacious cloister, forming an oblong quadrangle, enclosing the sacred earth of Jerusalem, conveyed hither about the period of the crusades, in the days of Pisanese prosperity. The holy mould produces a rampant crop of weeds, but none are permitted to spring from the pavement, which is entirely composed of tombs with slabs and monumental inscriptions smoothly laid. Ranges of slender pillars, formed of the whitest marble and glistening in the sun, support the arcades, which are carved with innumerable stars and roses, partly Gothic and partly Saracenial. Strange paintings of hell and the devil, mostly taken from Dante's rhapsodies, cover the walls of these fantastic galleries, attributed to the venerable Giotto and Bufalmacco, whom Boccace mentions in his "Decamerone."

Beneath, along the base of the columns, rows of pagan sarcophagi are placed, to my no small surprise, as I could not have supposed the Pisanese sufficiently tolerant to admit profane sculptures within such consecrated precincts. However, there they are, as well as fifty other contradictory ornaments.

I was quite seized by the strangeness of the place, and paced fifty times round and round the cloisters, discovering at every time some odd novelty. When tired, I seated myself on a fair slab of *giallo antico*, that looked a little cleaner than its neighbours (which I only mention to identify the precise point of view), and looking through the filigreed covering of the arches, observed the domes of the cathedral, cupola of the baptistery, and roof of the leaning tower rising above the leads, and forming the strangest assemblage of pinnacles perhaps in Europe. The place is neither sad nor solemn; the arches are airy, the pillars light, and there is so much caprice, such an exotic look in the whole scene, that without any violent effort of fancy one might imagine one's self in fairyland. Every object is new, every ornament original; the mixture of antique sarcophagi with Gothic sepulchres, completes the vagaries of the prospect, to which, one day or other, I think of returning, to act a visionary part, hear visionary music, and commune with sprites, for I shall never find in the whole universe besides so whimsical a theatre. It was between ten and eleven when we entered the Campo Santo, and one o'clock struck before I could be persuaded to leave it; and 'twas the sun which then

drove me away; whose heat was so powerful that all the inhabitants of Pisa showed their wisdom by keeping within doors. Not an animal appeared in the streets, except five camels laden with water, stalking along a range of garden walls and pompous mansions, with an awning before every door. We were obliged to follow their steps, at least a quarter of a mile, before we reached our inn. Ice was the first thing I sought after, and when I had swallowed an unreasonable portion, I began not to think quite so much of the deserts of Africa, as the heat and the camels had induced me a moment ago.

Early in the afternoon, we proceeded to Livourno through a wild tract of forest, somewhat in the style of our English parks. The trees in some places formed such shady arbours, that we could not resist the desire of walking beneath them, and were well rewarded; for after struggling through a rough thicket, we entered a lawn hemmed in by oaks and chestnuts, which extends several leagues along the coast and conceals the prospect of the ocean; but we heard its murmurs.

Nothing could be smoother or more verdant than the herbage, which was sprinkled with daisies and purple crocuses, as in the month of May. I felt all the genial sensations of Spring steal into my bosom, and was greatly delighted upon discovering vast bushes of myrtle in bloom. The softness of the air, the sound of the distant surges, the evening gleams, and repose of the landscape, quieted the tumult of my spirits, and I experienced the calm of my infant hours. I lay down in the open turf-walks between the shrubberies, listlessly surveyed the cattle browsing at a distance, and the blue hills that rose above the foliage, and bounded the view. During a few moments I had forgotten every care; but when I began to inquire into my happiness, I found it vanish. I felt myself without those I love most, in situations they would have warmly admired, and without them these pleasant meads and woodlands were of little avail.

We had not left this woody region far behind, when the Fanalè began to lift itself above the horizon—the Fanalè you have so often mentioned; the sky and ocean glowing with amber light, and the ships out at sea appearing in a golden haze, of which we have no conception in our northern climates. Such a prospect, together with the fresh gales from the

Mediterranean, charmed me; I hurried immediately to the port and sat on a reef of rocks, listening to the waves that broke amongst them.

LETTER XVI.

October 3rd.—I went, as you would have done, to walk on the mole as soon as the sun began to shine upon it. Its construction you are no stranger to; therefore I think I may spare myself the trouble of saying anything about it, except that the port which it embraces is no longer crowded. Instead of ten ranks of vessels there are only three, and those consist chiefly of Corsican galleys, that look as poor and tattered as their masters. Not much attention did I bestow upon such objects, but, taking my seat at the extremity of the quay, surveyed the smooth plains of ocean, the coast scattered over with watch-towers, and the rocky isle of Gorgona, emerging from the morning mists, which still lingered upon the horizon.

Whilst I was musing upon the scene, and calling up all that train of ideas before my imagination, which possessed your own upon beholding it, an ancient figure, with a beard that would have suited a sea-god, stepped out of a boat, and tottering up the steps of the quay, presented himself before me with a basket in his hand. He stayed dripping a few moments before he pronounced a syllable, and when he began his discourse, I was in doubt whether I should not have moved off in a hurry, there was something so wan and singular in his countenance. Except this being, no other was visible for a quarter of a mile at least. I knew not what strange adventure I might be upon the point of commencing, or what message I was to expect from the submarine divinities. However, after all my conjectures, the figure turned out to be no other than an old fisherman, who, having picked up a few large branches of red coral, offered them to sale. I eagerly made the purchase, and thought myself a favourite of Neptune, since he allowed me to acquire for next to nothing some of his most beautiful ornaments.

My bargain thus expeditiously finished, I ran along the quay with my basket of coral, and, jumping into a boat, was rowed back to the gate of the port. The carriage waited there; I

filled it with jasmine, shut myself up in the shade of the green blinds, and was driven away at a rate that favoured my impatience. We bowled smoothly over the lawns I attempted describing in my last letter, amongst myrtles in flower, that would have done honour to the island of Juan Fernandes.

Arrived at Pisa, I scarcely allowed myself a moment to revisit the Campo Santo, but, after taking my usual portion of ice and pomegranate-seeds, hurried on to Lucca as fast as horses could carry me, threw the whole idle town into a stare by my speedy return, and gave myself up to *Q. Fabio.*

Next day (October 4th) was passed in running over my old haunts upon the hills, and bidding farewell to several venerable chestnuts, for which I had contracted a sort of friendship by often experiencing their protection. I could not help feeling some melancholy sensation when I turned round the last time to bid them adieu. Who knows but some dryad enclosed within them was conscious of my gratitude, and noted it down on the bark of her tree? It was late before I finished my excursion, and soon after I had walked as usual upon the ramparts the opera began.

LETTER XVII.

FLORENCE, *October 5th.*

It was not without regret that I forced myself from Lucca. We had all the same road to go over again, that brought us to this important republic, but we broke down by way of variety. The wind was chill, the atmosphere damp and clogged with unwholesome vapours, through which we were forced to walk for a league, whilst our chaise lagged after us.

Taking shelter in a miserable cottage, we remained shivering and shaking till the carriage was in some sort of order, and then proceeded so slowly that we did not arrive at Florence till late in the evening. We found an apartment over the Arno prepared for our reception. The river, swollen with rains, roared like a mountain torrent. Throwing open my windows, I viewed its agitated course by the light of the moon, half concealed in stormy clouds, which hung above the fortress of the Belvedere, and cast a lowering gleam over the hills, which rise above the town, and wave with cypress. I sat contemplat-

ing the effect of the shadows on the bridge, on the heights of Boboli, and the mountain covered with pale olive groves, amongst which a convent is situated, till the moon sunk into the darkest quarter of the sky, and a bell began to toll. Its sullen sound filled me with sadness. I closed the casements, called for lights, run to a harpsichord Vannini had prepared for me, and played somewhat in the strain of Jomelli's *Miserere.*

October 6th.—Every cloud was dispersed when I arose; the sunbeams glittered on the stream, and the purity and transparency of the æther added new charms to the woody eminences around. Such was the clearness of the air that even objects on the distant mountains were distinguishable. I felt quite revived by the exhilarating prospect, and walked in the splendour of sunshine to the porticos beneath the famous gallery; then to an ancient castle, raised in the days of the republic, which fronts the grand piazza: colossal statues and venerable terms are placed before it. On one side a fountain clung round with antique figures of bronze, by John of Bologna, so admirably wrought as to hold me several minutes in astonishment; on the other, three lofty Gothic arches, and under one of them the Perseus of Benvenuto Cellini, raised on a pedestal, incomparably designed and executed; which I could not behold uninterested, since its author has ever occupied a distinguished place in my kalendar of genius. Having examined some groups of sculptures, by Baccio Bandinelli and other mighty artists, I entered the court of the castle, dark and deep, as if hewn out of a rock; surrounded by a vaulted arcade, covered with arabesque ornaments, and supported by pillars as uncouthly carved as those of Persepolis. In the midst appears a marble fount with an image of bronze, that looks quite strange and cabalistic. I leaned against it, to look up to the summits of the walls, which rise to a vast height, from whence springs a slender tower. Above, in the apartments of the castle, were preserved numbers of curious cabinets, tables of inlaid gems, and a thousand rarities, collected by the house of Medici, but exposed by the present sovereign of Tuscany to public sale.

It was not without indignation that I learnt this new mark of contempt which the Austrians bestow on the memory of

those illustrious patrons of the Arts; whom, being unwilling to imitate, they affect to despise as a race of merchants, whose example it would be abasing their dignity to follow.

I could have stayed much longer to enjoy the novelty and strangeness of the place; but it was right to pay some compliments of form. That duty over, I dined in peace and solitude, read over your letters, and repaired, as evening drew on, to the thickets of Boboli.

What a serene sky! what mellowness in the tints of the mountains! A purple haze concealed the bases, whilst their summits were invested with saffron light, discovering every white cot and every copse that clothed their declivities. The prospect widened as I ascended the terraces of the garden.

After traversing many long alleys, brown with impending foliage, I emerged into a green opening on the brow of the hill, and seated myself under the statue of Ceres. From this high point I surveyed the mosaic cupola of the Duomo, its quaint turret, and one still more grotesque in its neighbourhood, built not improbably in the style of ancient Etruria. Beyond this singular group of buildings a plain stretches itself far and wide, most richly scattered over with villas, gardens, and groves of pine and olive, quite to the feet of the mountains.

After I had marked the sun's going down, I went through a plat of vines hanging on the steeps, to a little eminence, round which the wood grows wilder and more luxuriant, and the cypresses shoot up to a surprising elevation. The pruners have spared this sylvan corner, and suffered the bays to put forth their branches, and the ilex to dangle over the walks, many of whose entrances are nearly overgrown. I enjoyed the gloom of these shady arbours, in the midst of which rises a lofty pavilion with galleries running round it, not unlike the idea one forms of Turkish chiosks. Beneath lies a garden of vines and rose-trees, which I visited, and found a spring under a rustic arch of grotto-work, fringed round with ivy. Millions of fish inhabit here, of that beautiful glittering species which comes from China. This golden nation were leaping after insects, as I stood gazing upon the deep, clear water, and listening to the drops that trickle from the cove. Opposite to which, at the end of an alley of vines, you discover an oval bason, and in the midst of it a statue of Ganymede, sitting reclined upon the eagle, full of that graceful languor so peculiarly

Grecian. Whilst I was musing on the margin of the spring (for I returned to it after casting a look upon the sculpture), the moon rose above the tufted foliage of the terraces. Her silver brightness was strongly contrasted by the deep green of the holm-oak and bay, amongst which I descended by several flights of stairs, with neat marble balustrades crowned by vases of aloes.

It was about seven o'clock, and everybody was jumbling to my Lord T——'s, who lives in a fine house all over blue and silver, with stuffed birds, alabaster cupids, and a thousand prettinesses more; but, after all, neither he nor his abode are worth mentioning. I found a deal of slopping and sipping of tea going forwards, and many dawdlers assembled.

As I can say little good of the party, I had better shut the door, and conduct you to the opera, which is really a striking spectacle. However, it being addressed to the sight alone, I was soon tired, and gave myself up to conversation. Bedini, first soprano, put my patience to severe proof, during the few minutes I attended. You never beheld such a porpoise. If these animals were to sing, I should conjecture it would be in his style. You may suppose how often I invoked Pacchierotti, and regretted the lofty melody of *Quinto Fabio.* Everybody seemed as well contented as if there were no such thing as good music in the world, except a Neapolitan duchess, who delighted me by her vivacity. We took our fill of maledictions, and went home equally pleased with each other for having mutually execrated both singers and audience.

LETTER XVIII.

October 22nd.—They say the air is worse this year at Rome than ever, and that it would be madness to go thither during its malign influence. This was very bad news indeed to one heartily tired of Florence, at least of its society. Merciful powers! what a set harbour within its walls! * * * * * You may imagine I do not take vast or vehement delight in this company, though very ingenious, praiseworthy, etc. The woods of the Cascini shelter me every morning; and there grows an old crooked ilex at their entrance, twisting round a pine, upon whose branches I sit for hours,—hear, without

feeling, the showers trickling above my head, and see the cattle browsing peacefully in their pastures, which hazel copses, Italian pines, and groves of cypress enclose.

In the afternoon I never fail hiding myself in the thickets of Boboli, and marking the golden glimmer of sunset between their leaves. The other evening I varied my walks, and ascended one of those pleasant hills * which rise in the vicinity of the city, and command a variegated scene of spires, towns, villas, cots, and gardens. On the right, as you stand upon the brow, appears Fesule with its turrets and white houses, covering a rocky mount; to the left, the vast Val d'Arno lost in immensity. A Franciscan convent stands on the summit of the eminence, wrapped up in ancient cypresses, which hinder its holy inhabitants from seeing too much of so gay a view. The paved ascent leading up to their abode receives also a shade from the cypresses which border it. Beneath which venerable avenue, crosses with inscriptions are placed at stated distances, to mark the various moments of Christ's passion; as when fainting under His burden He halted to repose Himself, or when He met His afflicted mother ("Giesu incontra la fua afflitta madre").

Above, at the end of the perspective, rises a chapel designed with infinite taste and simple elegance by M. A. Buonarotti. Further on, an ancient church, in the corrupt Greek style of the primitive Christians, incrusted with white marble, porphyry, and verd antique. The interior presents a crowded assemblage of ornaments, elaborate mosaic pavements, and inlaid work without end. The high altar, placed in a semicircular recess, which reminded me of the church at Torcello, glitters with barbaric paintings on a gold ground, and receives the strongest glow of light imaginable from five windows, filled up with transparent marble clouded like tortoiseshell. A smooth polished staircase leads to this sacred place: another brought me to a subterraneous chapel, supported by confused groups of variegated pillars, just visible by the glimmer of lamps. I thought of the Zancaroon at Cordova, and began reciting the first verses of the Koran.

Passing on not unawed, I followed some flights of steps, which terminate in the neat cloisters of the convent, in perfect

* Mentioned by Dante in his "Purgatorio."

FLORENCE.

preservation, but totally deserted. Ranges of citron and aloes fill up the quadrangle, whose walls are hung with superstitious pictures most singularly fancied. The Jesuits were the last tenants of this retirement, and seem to have had great reason for their choice. Its peace and stillness delighted me.

Next day a very opposite scene engaged me, though much against my will. Her R. H. the G. Duchess having produced a princess in the night, everybody put on grand gala in the morning, and I was carried, along with the glittering tide of courtiers, ministers, and ladies, to see the christening. After hearing the Grand Duke talk politics for some time, the doors of a temporary chapel were thrown open. Trumpets flourished, processions marched, and the archbishop began his business at an altar of massive gold, placed under a yellow silk pavilion, with pyramids of lights before it. Wax tapers, though it was noon-day, shone in every corner of the apartments. Two rows of pages, gorgeously accoutred, and holding enormous torches, stood on each side his Royal Highness, and made him the prettiest courtesies imaginable, to the sound of an execrable band of music, though led by Nardini. The poor old archbishop, who looked very piteous and saint-like, struck up the Te Deum with a quavering voice, and the rest followed him full gallop.

That ceremony being despatched (for his R. H. was in a mighty fidget to shrink back into his beloved obscurity), the crowd dispersed, and I went, with a few others, to dine at my Lord Tilney's.

Evening drawing on, I ran to throw myself into the woods of Boboli, and remained till it was night in their profound recesses. Really this garden is enough to bewilder an enthusiastic spirit; there is something so solemn in its shades, its avenues, and spires of cypresses. When I had mused for many a melancholy hour amongst them, I emerged into the orangery before the palace, which overlooks the largest district of the town, and beheld, as I slowly descended the road which leads up to it, certain bright lights glancing across the cupola of the Duomo and the points of the highest towers. At first I thought them meteors, or those illusive fires which often dance before the eye of my imagination; but soon I was convinced of their reality: for in a few minutes the battlements of the old castle, which I remember mentioning in a former letter,

shone with lamps; the lantern of the cathedral was lighted up on a sudden; whilst a stream of torches ran along its fantastic turrets.

I enjoyed this prospect at a distance: when near, its pleasure was greatly diminished, for half the fish in the town were frying to rejoice the hearts of H. R. Highness's loyal subjects, and bonfires blazing in every street and alley. Hubbubs and stinks of every denomination drove me quickly to the theatre; but that was all glitter and glare. No taste, no arrangement, paltry looking-glasses, and rat's-tail candles. I had half a mind to return to Boboli.

LETTER XIX.

October 23rd.—Do you recollect our evening rambles last year upon the hill of pines? and the dark valley where we used to muse in the twilight? I remember we often fancied the scene like Valombrosa; and vowed, if ever an occasion offered, to visit that deep retirement. I had put off the execution of this pilgrimage from day to day till the warm weather was gone; and the Florentines declared I should be frozen if I attempted it. Everybody stared last night at the opera when I told them I was going to bury myself in fallen leaves, and hear no music but their rustlings.

Mr. —— was just as eager as myself to escape the chit-chat and nothingness of Florence; so we finally determined upon our expedition, and mounting our horses, set out this morning, happily without any company but the spirit which led us along. We had need of inspiration, since nothing else, I think, would have tempted us over such dreary, uninteresting hillocks as rise from the banks of the Arno. The hoary olive is their principal vegetation; so that Nature, in this part of the country, seems in a withering decrepit state, and may not unaptly be compared to "an old woman clothed in grey." However, we did not suffer the prospect to damp our enthusiasm, which was the better preserved for Valombrosa.

About half way, our palfreys thought proper to look out for some oats, and I to creep into a sort of granary in the midst of a barren waste, scattered over with white rocks, that reflected

more heat than I cared for, although I had been told snow and ice were to be my portion. Seating myself on the floor between heaps of corn, I reached down a few purple clusters of Muscadine grapes, which hung to dry in the ceiling, and amused myself very pleasantly with them till the horses had finished their meal and it was lawful to set forwards. We met with nothing but rocky steeps shattered into fragments, and such roads as half inclined us to repent our undertaking; but cold was not yet amongst the number of our evils.

At last, after ascending a tedious while, we began to feel the wind blow sharp from the peaks of the mountains, and to hear the murmur of the forests of pine which shade their acclivities. A paved path leads across them, quite darkened by boughs, which, meeting over our heads, cast a gloom and a chill below, that would have stopped the proceedings of reasonable mortals, and sent them to bask in the plain; but, being not so easily discomfited, we threw ourselves boldly into the forest. It presented one of those confusions of tall straight stems I am so fond of, and exhaled a fresh aromatic odour that revived my spirits.

The cold to be sure was piercing; but setting that at defiance, we galloped on, and issued shortly into a vast amphitheatre of lawns and meadows, surrounded by thick woods beautifully green. Flocks of sheep were dispersed on the slopes, whose smoothness and verdure equal our English pastures. Steep cliffs and mountains, clothed with beech to their very summits, guard this retired valley. The herbage, moistened by streams which fall from the eminences, has never been known to fade; and, whilst the chief part of Tuscany is parched by the heats of summer, these upland meadows retain the freshness of spring. I regretted not having visited them sooner, as autumn had already made great havoc amongst the foliage. Showers of leaves blew full in our faces as we rode towards the convent, placed at an extremity of the vale, and sheltered by remote firs and chestnuts towering one above another.

Alighting before the entrance, two fathers came out and received us into the peace of their retirement. We found a blazing fire, and tables spread very comfortably before it, round which five or six overgrown friars were lounging, who seemed, by the sleekness and rosy hue of their countenances, not totally to have despised this mortal existence.

My letters of recommendation soon brought the heads of the order about me, fair round figures, such as a Chinese would have placed in his pagoda. I could willingly have dispensed with their attention; yet to avoid this was scarcely within the circle of possibility. All dinner we endured the silliest questions imaginable; but that despatched, away flew your humble servant to the fields and forests. The fathers made a shift to waddle after, as fast and as complaisantly as they were able, but were soon distanced.

Now, I found myself at liberty, and ran up a narrow path overhung by rock, with bushy chestnuts starting from the crevices. This led me into wild glens of beech trees, mostly decayed and covered with moss: several were fallen. It was amongst these the holy hermit Gualbertus had his cell. I rested a moment upon one of their huge branches, listening to the roar of a waterfall which the wood concealed; then springing up, I clambered over crags and fragments, guided by the sound, and presently discovered a full stream, precipitating itself down a cliff of pine, amongst which I remained several minutes, watching the fallen floods; till, tired with their endless succession, I plunged into the thickest of the grove. A beech received me, like a second Gualbertus, in its hollow trunk. The dry leaves chased each other down the steeps on the edge of the torrents with hollow rustlings, whilst the solemn wave of the forests above exactly answered the idea I had formed of Valombrosa,

> "... where th' Etrurian shades
> High overarch't imbowr."

The scene was beginning to take effect, and the genius of Milton to move across his favourite valley, when the fathers arrived puffing and blowing, by an easier ascent than I knew of. Pardon me, if I cursed their intrusion, and wished them as still as Gualbertus.

"You have missed the way," cried the youngest; "the hermitage, with the fine picture by Andrea del Sarto, which all the English admire, is on the opposite side of the wood: there! don't you see it on the point of the cliff?"

"Yes, yes," said I a little peevishly; "I wonder the devil has not pushed it down long ago; it seems to invite his kick."

"Satan," answered the old Pagod very dryly, "is full of malice; but whoever drinks of a spring which the Lord causeth to flow near the hermitage is freed from his illusions."

"Are they so?" replied I with a sanctified accent; "then prithee conduct me thither, for I have great need of such salutary waters, being troubled with strange fancies and imaginations, such as the evil one himself ought to be ashamed of inspiring."

The youngest father shook his head, as much as to say, "This is nothing more than a heretic's whim."

The senior—muddled, I conjecture—set forwards with greater piety, and began some legendary tales of the kind which my soul loveth: rare stories of caves and dens of the earth, inhabited by ancient men familiar with spirits, and not the least discomposed by a party of angels coming to dinner, or playing a game at miracles to pass away the evening. He pointed to a chasm in the cliff, round which we were winding by a spiral path, where Gualbertus used to sleep, and, turning himself towards the west, see a long succession of saints and martyrs sweeping athwart the sky, and gilding the clouds with far brighter splendours than the setting sun. Here he rested till his last hour, when the bells of the convent beneath (which till that moment would have made dogs howl, had there been any within its precincts) struck out such harmonious jingling that all the country around was ravished, and began lifting up their eyes with singular devotion, when, behold! cherubim appeared, light dawned, and birds chirped, although it was midnight. Alas! alas! what would I not give to witness such a spectacle, and read my prayer-book by the effulgence of opening heaven!

However, willing to see something at least, I crept into the consecrated cleft, and extended myself on its rugged surface. A very penitential couch! but commanding glorious prospects of the world below, which lay this evening in deep blue shade; the sun looking red and angry through misty vapours, which prevented our discovering the Tuscan sea.

Finding the rock as damp as might be expected, I soon shifted my quarters, and followed the youngest father up to the Romitorio, a snug little hermitage, with a neat chapel, and altar-piece by Andrea del Sarto, which I should have more minutely examined in any other place, but where the wild

scenery of hanging woods and meadows, steep hills and nodding precipices, possessed my whole attention. I just stayed to taste the holy fountain; and then, escaping from my conductors, ran eagerly down the path, leaping over the springs that crossed it, and entered a lawn of the smoothest turf, grazed by sheep, and swelling into gentle acclivities, skirted by groves of fir, whose solemn verdure formed a contrast with its tender green. Beyond this pleasant opening rises a second, hemmed in with copses; and still higher, a third, whence a forest of young pines spires up into a lofty theatre terminated by peaks, universally concealed under a thick mantle of beech, tinged with ruddy brown. Pausing in the midst of the lawns, and looking upward to the sweeps of wood which surrounded me, I addressed my orisons to the genius of the place, and prayed that I might once more return into its bosom, and be permitted to bring you along with me, for surely such meads, such groves, were formed for our enjoyment!

This little rite performed, I walked on quite to the extremity of the pastures, traversed a thicket, and found myself on the edge of precipices, beneath whose base the whole Val d'Arno lies expanded. I listened to distant murmurings in the plain, saw smoke rise from the cottages, and viewed a vast tract of barren country, which evening rendered still more desolate, bounded by the high mountain of Radicofani. Then, turning round, I beheld the whole extent of rock and forest, the groves of beech, and wilds above the convent, glowing with fiery red, for the sun, making a last effort to pierce the vapours, produced this effect; which was the more striking, as the sky was dark, and the rest of the prospect of a melancholy blue.

Returning slowly homeward, I marked the warm glow deserting the eminences, and heard the bell toll sullenly to vespers. The young boys of the seminary were moving in a body to their dark inclosure, all dressed in black. Many of them looked pale and wan. I wished to ask them whether the solitude of Valombrosa suited their age and vivacity; but a tall spectre of a priest drove them along like a herd, and presently, the gates opening, I saw them no more. A sadness I could scarcely account for came over me. I shivered at the bare idea of being cooped up in such a place, and

seeing no other living objects than scarecrow priests and friars; to hear every day the same dull service and droning organ; view the same cloisters; be led the same walks; watched, cribbed, confined, and filled with superstitious fears.

The night was growing chill, the winds boisterous, and in the intervals of the gusts I had the addition of a lamentable screech-owl to raise my spirits. Upon the whole, I was not at all concerned to meet the fathers, who came out to show me to my room, and entertain me with various gossipings, both sacred and profane, till supper appeared.

Next morning, the Padre Decano gave us chocolate in his apartment; and afterwards led us round the convent, insisting most unmercifully upon our viewing every cell and every dormitory. However, I was determined to make a full stop at the organ, which is perhaps the most harmonious I ever played upon; but placed in a dark, dingy recess, feebly lighted by lamps, not calculated to inspire triumphant voluntaries. The monks, who had all crowded around me when I first began, in expectation of brisk jigs and lively overtures, soon took themselves away upon hearing a strain ten times more sorrowful than that to which they were accustomed. I did not lament their departure, but played dismally on till our horses came round to the gate. We mounted, spurred back through the grove of pines which protect Valombrosa from intrusion, descended the steeps, and, gaining the plains, galloped in three hours to Florence.

LETTER XX.

SIENNA, *October 26th.*

At last fears were overcome, the epidemical fever at Rome allowed to be no longer dangerous, and myself permitted to quit Florence. The weather was neither gay nor dismal; the country neither fine nor ugly; and your friend full as indifferent as the scenes he looked at. Towards afternoon, a thunder-storm gave character to the landscape, and we entered a narrow vale enclosed by rocks, with streams running at their base. Poplars with faded yellow leaves sprung from the margins of

the rivulets, which seemed to lose themselves in the ruins of a castle, built in the Gothic times. Our road led through its court and passed the ancient keep, still darkened by its turrets; a few mud cottages are scattered about the opening where formerly the chieftain exercised his vassals, and trained them to war. The dungeon, once filled with miserable victims, serves only at present to confine a few goats, which were milking before its entrance. As we were driven along under a tottering gateway, and then through a plain and up a hill, the breeze whispering amongst the fern which covers it, I felt the sober autumnal cast of the evening bring back the happy hours I passed last year at this very time, calm and sequestered. Full of these recollections, my eyes closed of their own accord, and were not opened for many hours; in short, till we entered Sienna.

October 27th.—Here my duty of course was to see the cathedral, and I got up much earlier than I wished, in order to perform it. I wonder our holy ancestors did not choose a mountain at once, scrape it into shrines, and chisel it into scripture stories. It would have cost them almost as little trouble as the building in question, which may certainly be esteemed a masterpiece of ridiculous taste and elaborate absurdity. The front, incrusted with alabaster, is worked into a million of fretted arches and puzzling ornaments. There are statues without number and relievos without end.

The church within is all of black and white marble alternately; the roof blue and gold, with a profusion of silken banners hanging from it; and a cornice running above the principal arcade, composed entirely of bustos representing the whole series of sovereign pontiffs, from the first Bishop of Rome to Adrian the Fourth. Pope Joan figured amongst them, between Leo the Fourth and Benedict the Third, till the year 1600, when she was turned out, at the instance of Clement the Eighth, to make room for Zacharias the First.

I hardly knew which was the nave, or which the cross aisle, of this singular edifice, so perfect is the confusion of its parts. The pavement demands attention, being inlaid so curiously as to represent variety of histories taken from Holy Writ, and designed in the true style of that hobgoblin tapestry which used to bestare the halls of our ancestors. Near the high altar stands the strangest of pulpits, supported by polished

pillars of granite, rising from lions' backs, which serve as pedestals. In every corner of the place some chapel or other offends or astonishes you. That, however, of the Chigi family, it must be allowed, has infinite merit with respect to design and execution; but it is so lost in general disorder as to want the best part of its effect.

From the church one enters a vaulted chamber, erected by the Picolominis, filled with valuable missals most exquisitely illuminated. The paintings in fresco on the walls are rather barbarous, though executed after the designs of the mighty Raffaelle; but then, we must remember, he had but just escaped from Pietro Perugino.

Not staying long in the Duomo, we left Sienna in good time; and, after being shaken and tumbled in the worst roads that were ever pretended to be made use of, found ourselves beneath the rough mountains round Radicofani, about seven o'clock on a cold and dismal evening. Up we toiled a steep craggy ascent, and reached at length the inn upon its summit. My heart sunk when I entered a vast range of apartments, with high black rafted roofs, once intended for a hunting palace of the Grand Dukes, but now desolate and forlorn. The wind having risen, every door began to shake, and every board substituted for a window to clatter, as if the severe power who dwells on the topmost peak of Radicofani, according to its village mythologists, was about to visit his abode. My only spell to keep him at a distance was kindling an enormous fire, whose charitable gleams cheered my spirits, and gave them a quicker flow. Yet, for some minutes, I never ceased looking, now to the right, now to the left, up at the dark beams, and down the long passages, where the pavement, broken up in several places, and earth newly strewn about, seemed to indicate that something horrid was concealed below.

A grim fraternity of cats kept whisking backwards and forwards in these dreary avenues, which I am apt to imagine is the very identical scene of a sabbath of witches at certain periods. Not venturing to explore them, I fastened my door, pitched my bed opposite the hearth, which glowed with embers, and crept under the coverlids, hardly venturing to go to sleep, lest I should be suddenly roused from it by the sudden glare of torches, and be more initiated than I wished into the mysteries of the place.

Scarce was I settled, before two or three of the brotherhood just mentioned stalked in at a little opening under the door. I insisted upon their moving off faster than they had entered, suspecting that they would soon turn wizards, and was surprised, when midnight came, to hear nothing more than their mewings, doleful enough, and echoed by the hollow walls and arches.

LETTER XXI.

RADICOFANI, *October 28th.*

I begin to despair of magical adventures, since none happened at Radicofani, which Nature seems wholly to have abandoned. Not a tree, not an acre of soil, has she bestowed upon its inhabitants, who would have more excuse for practising the gloomy art than the rest of mankind. I was very glad to leave their black hills and stony wilderness behind, and, entering the Papal territory, to see some shrubs and corn-fields at a distance, near Aquapadente, which is situated on a ledge of cliffs, mantled with chestnut copses and tufted ilex. The country grew varied and picturesque. St. Lorenzo, the next post, built upon a hill, overlooks the lake of Bolsena, whose woody shores conceal many ruined buildings. We passed some of them in a retired vale, with arches from rock to rock, and grottos beneath half lost in thickets, from which rise craggy pinnacles crowned by mouldering towers; just such scenery as Polemburg and Peter de Laer introduce in their paintings.

Beyond these truly Italian prospects, which a mellow evening tint rendered still more interesting, a forest of oaks presents itself upon the brows of hills, which extends almost the whole way to Monte Fiascone. It was late before we ascended it. The whole country seems full of inhabited caverns, that began as night drew on to shine with fires. We saw many dark shapes glancing before them, and perhaps a subterraneous people like the Cimmerians lurk in their recesses. As we drew near Viterbo, the lights in the fields grew less and less frequent; and when we entered the town, all was total darkness.

To-morrow I hope to pay my vows before the high altar of

St. Peter, and tread the Vatican. Why are you not here to usher me into the imperial city: to watch my first glance of the Coliseo: and lead me up the stairs of the Capitol? I shall rise before the sun, that I may see him set from Monte Cavallo.

LETTER XXII.

ROME, *October 29th.*

We set out in the dark. Morning dawned over the Lago di Vico; its waters of a deep ultramarine blue, and its surrounding forests catching the rays of the rising sun. It was in vain I looked for the cupola of St. Peter's upon descending the mountains beyond Viterbo. Nothing but a sea of vapours was visible.

At length they rolled away, and the spacious plains began to show themselves, in which the most warlike of nations reared their seat of empire. On the left, afar off, rises the rugged chain of Apennines, and on the other side, a shining expanse of ocean terminates the view. It was upon this vast surface so many illustrious actions were performed, and I know not where a mighty people could have chosen a grander theatre. Here was space for the march of armies, and verge enough for encampments. Levels for martial games, and room for that variety of roads and causeways that led from the capital to Ostia. How many triumphant legions have trodden these pavements! how many captive kings! What throngs of cars and chariots once glittered on their surface! savage animals dragged from the interior of Africa; and the ambassadors of Indian princes, followed by their exotic train, hastening to implore the favour of the senate!

During many ages, this eminence commanded almost every day such illustrious scenes; but all are vanished: the splendid tumult is passed away; silence and desolation remain. Dreary flats thinly scattered over with ilex, and barren hillocks crowned by solitary towers, were the only objects we perceived for several miles. Now and then we passed a few black ill-favoured sheep feeding by the way-side, near a ruined sepulchre, just such animals as an ancient would have sacrificed to the Manes. Sometimes we crossed a brook, whose

ripplings were the only sounds which broke the general stillness, and observed the shepherds' huts on its banks, propped up with broken pedestals and marble friezes. I entered one of them, whose owner was abroad tending his herds, and began writing upon the sand, and murmuring a melancholy song. Perhaps the dead listened to me from their narrow cells. The living I can answer for: they were far enough removed.

You will not be surprised at the dark tone of my musings in so sad a scene, especially as the weather lowered; and you are well acquainted how greatly I depend upon skies and sunshine. To-day I had no blue firmament to revive my spirits; no genial gales, no aromatic plants to irritate my nerves and give me at least a momentary animation. Heath and furze were the sole vegetation which covers this endless wilderness. Every slope is strewed with the relics of a happier period; trunks of trees, shattered columns, cedar beams, helmets of bronze, skulls and coins, are frequently dug up together.

I cannot boast of having made any discoveries, nor of sending you any novel intelligence. You knew before how perfectly the environs of Rome were desolate, and how completely the Papal government contrives to make its subjects miserable. But who knows that they were not just as wretched in those boasted times we are so fond of celebrating? All is doubt and conjecture in this frail existence; and I might as well attempt proving to whom belonged the mouldering bones which lay dispersed around me, as venture to affirm that one age is more fortunate than another. Very likely the poor cottager, under whose roof I reposed, is happier than the luxurious Roman upon the remains of whose palace, perhaps, his shed is raised: and yet that Roman flourished in the purple days of the empire, when all was wealth and splendour, triumph and exultation.

I could have spent the whole day by the rivulet, lost in dreams and meditations; but recollecting my vow, I ran back to the carriage and drove on. The road not having been mended, I believe, since the days of the Cæsars, would not allow our motions to be very precipitate. "When you gain the summit of yonder hill, you will discover Rome," said one of the postillions: up we dragged; no city appeared. "From the next," cried

out a second; and so on from height to height did they amuse my expectations. I thought Rome fled before us, such was my impatience, till at last we perceived a cluster of hills with green pastures on their summits, inclosed by thickets and shaded by flourishing ilex. Here and there a white house, built in the antique style, with open porticos, that received a faint gleam of the evening sun, just emerged from the clouds and tinting the meads below. Now domes and towers began to discover themselves in the valley, and St. Peter's to rise above the magnificent roofs of the Vatican. Every step we advanced the scene extended, till, winding suddenly round the hill, all Rome opened to our view.

A spring flowed opportunely into a marble cistern close by the way; two cypresses and a pine waved over it. I leaped up, poured water upon my hands, and then, lifting them up to the sylvan Genii of the place, implored their protection. I wished to have run wild in the fresh fields and copses above the Vatican, there to have remained till fauns might creep out of their concealment, and satyrs begin to touch their flutes in the twilight, for the place looks still so wondrous classical, that I can never persuade myself either Constantine Attila or the Popes themselves have chased them all away. I think I should have found some out, who would have fed me with milk and chestnuts, have sung me a Latian ditty, and mourned the woeful changes which have taken place, since their sacred groves were felled, and Faunus ceased to be oracular. Who can tell but they would have given me some mystic skin to sleep on, that I might have looked into futurity?

Shall I ever forget the sensations I experienced upon slowly descending the hills, and crossing the bridge over the Tiber; when I entered an avenue between terraces and ornamented gates of villas, which leads to the Porto del Popolo, and beheld the square, the domes, the obelisk, the long perspective of streets and palaces opening beyond, all glowing with the vivid red of sunset? You can imagine how I enjoyed my beloved tint, my favourite hour, surrounded by such objects. You can fancy me ascending Monte Cavallo, leaning against the pedestal which supports Bucephalus; then, spite of time and distance, hurrying to St. Peter's in performance of my vow.

I met the Holy Father in all his pomp returning from vespers: trumpets flourishing, and a legion of guards drawn

out upon Ponte St. Angelo. Casting a respectful glance upon the Moles Adriani, I moved on till the full sweep of St. Peter's colonnade opened upon me, and fixed me, as if spell-bound, under the obelisk, lost in wonder. The edifice appears to have been raised within the year, such is its freshness and preservation. I could hardly take my eyes from off the beautiful symmetry of its front, contrasted with the magnificent though irregular courts of the Vatican towering over the colonnade, till, the sun sinking behind the dome, I ran up the steps and entered the grand portal, which was on the very point of being closed.

I knew not where I was, or to what scene transported. A sacred twilight concealing the extremities of the structure, I could not distinguish any particular ornament, but enjoyed the effect of the whole. No damp air or fetid exhalation offended me. The perfume of incense was not yet entirely dissipated. No human being stirred. I heard a door close with the sound of thunder, and thought I distinguished some faint whisperings, but am ignorant whence they came. Several hundred lamps twinkled round the high altar, quite lost in the immensity of the pile. No other light disturbed my reveries but the dying glow still visible through the western windows. Imagine how I felt upon finding myself alone in this vast temple at so late an hour, and think whether I had not revelations.

It was almost eight o'clock before I issued forth, and, pausing a few minutes under the porticos, listened to the rush of the fountains: then traversing half the town, I believe, in my way to the Villa Medici, under which I am lodged, fell into a profound repose, which my zeal and exercise may be allowed, I think, to have merited.

October 30*th.*—It was a clear morning; I mounted up to the roof of the house, and sat under a set of open pavilions, surveying the vast group of stately buildings below; then repaired immediately after breakfast to St. Peter's, which even exceeded the height of my expectations. I could hardly quit it. I wish his Holiness would allow me to erect a little tabernacle under the dome. I should desire no other prospect during the winter; no other sky than the vast arches glowing with golden ornaments, so lofty as to lose all glitter or gaudiness. But I cannot say I should be perfectly contented, unless I could obtain another pavilion for you. Thus established,

we would take our evening walks on the field of marble ; for is not the pavement vast enough to excuse the extravagance of the appellation? Sometimes, instead of climbing a mountain, we should ascend the cupola, and look down on our little encampment below. At night I should wish for a constellation of lamps dispersed about in clusters, and so contrived as to diffuse a mild and equal light for us to read or draw by. Music should not be wanting : one day to breathe in the subterraneous chapels, another to mount high into the dome.

The doors should be closed, and not a mortal admitted. No priests, no cardinals : God forbid ! We should have all the space to ourselves, and to such creatures, too, as resemble us.

The windows I should shade with transparent curtains of yellow silk, to admit the glow of perpetual summer. Lanterns, as many as you please, of all forms and sizes; they would remind us of China, and, depending from the roof of the palace, bring before us that of the Emperor Ki, which was twice as large as St. Peter's (if we may credit the grand annals), and lighted alone by tapers, for his Imperial Majesty, being tired of the sun, would absolutely have a new firmament of his own creation, and an artificial day. Was it not a rare fantastic idea? For my part, I should like of all things to immure myself after his example, with those I love ; forget the divisions of time, have a moon at command, and a theatrical sun to rise and set at pleasure.

I was so absorbed in my imaginary palace, and exhausted with contriving plans for its embellishment, as to have no spirits left for the Pantheon, which I visited late in the evening, and entered with a reverence approaching to superstition. The whiteness of the dome offending me, I slunk into one of the recesses, closed my eyes, transported myself into antiquity; then opened them again, tried to persuade myself the pagan gods were in their niches, and the saints out of the question ; was vexed at coming to my senses, and finding them all there, St. Andrew with his cross, and St. Agnes with her lamb, etc., etc. Then I paced disconsolately into the portico, which shows the name of Agrippa on its pediment. I leaned a minute against a Corinthian column; I lamented that no pontiff arrived with victims and aruspices, of whom I might inquire, what, in the name of birds and garbage, put me so terribly out of humour ! for you must know I was very near being

disappointed, and began to think Piranesi and Paolo Panini had been a great deal too colossal in their view of this venerable structure. I left the column, walked to the centre of the temple, and, folding my arms, stood as fixed as a statue. Some architects have celebrated the effect of light from the opening above, and pretended it to be distributed around so as to give those who walk beneath the appearance of mystic substances beaming with radiance. Mighty fine, if that were the case! I appeared, to be sure, a luminous figure, and never stood I more in need of something to distinguish me, being forlorn and dismal in the supreme degree.

But though it is not so immense as I had expected, yet a certain venerable air, an awful gloom, breathed inspiration, though of the sorrowful kind.

I had expected a heap of Venetian letters, but could not discover one. I had received no intelligence from England this many a tedious day; and for aught I can tell to the contrary, you may have been dead these three weeks. I think I shall wander soon in the Catacombs, which I am half inclined to imagine communicate with the lower world; and perhaps I may find some letter there from you, lying upon a broken sarcophagus, dated from the realms of Night, and giving an account of your descent into her bosom. Yet, I pray continually, notwithstanding my curiosity to learn what passes in the dark regions beyond the tomb, that you will condescend to remain a few years longer on our planet; for what would become of me, should I lose sight of you for ever? Stay, therefore, as long as you can, and let us have the delight of dozing a little more of this poor existence away together, and steeping ourselves in pleasant dreams.

October 31*st.*—I absolutely will have no antiquary to go prating from fragment to fragment, and tell me, that were I to stay five years at Rome, I should not see half it contained. The thought alone, of so much to look at, is quite distracting, and makes me resolve to view nothing at all in a scientific way; but straggle and wander about, just as the spirit chooses. This evening, it led me to the Coliseo, and excited a vehement desire in me to break down and pulverize the whole circle of saints' nests and chapels, which disgrace the arena. You recollect, I dare say, the vile effect of this holy trumpery, and would join with all your heart in kicking it into the Tiber.

MODERN ROME.

A few lazy abbots were at their devotions before them; such as would have made a lion's mouth water; fatter, I dare say, than any saint in the whole martyrology, and ten times more tantalizing. I looked first, at the dens where wild beasts used to be kept, to divert the magnanimous people of Rome with devastation and murder; then, at the tame cattle before the altars. Heavens! thought I to myself, how times are changed! Could ever Vespasian have imagined his amphitheatre would have been thus inhabited? I passed on, making these reflections, to a dark arcade, overgrown with ilex. In the openings which time and violence have made, a distant grove of cypresses discover themselves; springing from heaps of mouldering ruins, relieved by a clear transparent sky, strewed with a few red clouds. This was the sort of prospect I desired, and I sat down on a shattered frieze to enjoy it. Many stories of ancient Rome thronged into my mind as I mused; triumphal scenes, but tempered by sadness, and the awful thoughts of their being all passed away. It would be in vain to recapitulate the ideas which chased one another along. Think where I sat, and you may easily conjecture the series. When the procession was fleeted by (for I not only thought, but seemed to see warriors moving amongst the cypresses, and consuls returning from Parthian expeditions, loaded with strange spoils, and received with the acclamations of millions upon entering the theatre), I arose, crossed the arena, paced several times round and round, looked up to arcade rising above arcade, and admiring the stately height and masses of the structure, considered it in various points of view, and felt, as if I never should be satisfied with gazing, hour after hour, and day after day. Next, directing my steps to the arch of Constantine, I surveyed the groups of ruins which surrounded me. The cool breeze of the evening played in the beds of canes and osiers which flourished under the walls of the Coliseo: a cloud of birds were upon the wing to regain their haunts in its crevices; and, except the sound of their flight, all was silent; for happily no carriages were rattling along. I observed the palace and obelisk of St. John of Lateran, at a distance; but it was too late to take a nearer survey; so, returning leisurely home, I traversed the Campo Vaccino, and leaned a moment against one of the columns which supported the temple of Jupiter Stator. Some women were fetching water

from the fountain hard by, whilst another group had kindled a fire under the shrubs and twisted fig-trees, which cover the Palatine Hill. Innumerable vaults and arches peep out of the vegetation. It was upon these, in all probability, the splendid palace of the Cæsars was raised. Confused fragments of marble, and walls of lofty terraces, are the sole traces of its ancient magnificence. A wretched rabble were roasting their chestnuts, on the very spot, perhaps, where Domitian convened a senate, to harangue upon the delicacies of his entertainment. The light of the flame cast upon the figures around it, and the mixture of tottering wall with foliage impending above their heads, formed a striking picture, which I stayed contemplating from my pillar, till the fire went out, the assembly dispersed, and none remained but a withered hag, raking the embers, and muttering to herself. I thought also it was high time to retire, lest the unwholesome mists, which were streaming from the opening before the Coliseo, might make me repent my stay. Whether they had already taken effect, or no, I will not absolutely determine ; but something or other had grievously disordered me. A few centuries ago I should have taxed the old hag with my headache, and have attributed the uncommon oppression I experienced to her baleful power. Hastening to my hotel, I mounted into the open portico upon its summit, nearly upon a level with the Villa Medici, and sat, several hours, with my arms folded in one another, listening to the distant rumours of the town. It had been a fine moment to have bestrode one of the winds which piped around me, offering, no doubt, some compact from Lucifer.

November 1st.—Though you find I am not yet snatched away from the earth, according to my last night's bodings, I was far too restless and dispirited to deliver my recommendatory letters. St. Carlos, a mighty day of gala at Naples, was an excellent excuse for leaving Rome, and indulging my roving disposition. After spending my morning at St. Peter's, we set off about four o'clock, and drove by the Coliseo and a Capuchin convent, whose monks were all busied in preparing the skeletons of their order, to figure by torchlight in the evening. St. John's of Lateran astonished me. I could not help walking several times round the obelisk, and admiring the noble open space in which the palace is erected, and the extensive scene

of towers and aqueducts discovered from the platform in front.

We went out at the Porta Appia, and began to perceive the plains which surround the city opening on every side. Long reaches of walls and arches, but seldom interrupted, stretch across them. Sometimes, indeed, a withered pine, lifting itself up to the mercy of every blast that sweeps the champagne, breaks their uniformity. Between the aqueducts to the left, nothing but wastes of fern, or tracts of ploughed lands, dark and desolate, are visible, the corn not being yet sprung up. On the right, several groups of ruined fanes and sepulchres diversify the levels, with here and there a garden or woody inclosure. Such objects are scattered over the landscape, that towards the horizon bulges into gentle ascents, and, rising by degrees, swells at length into a chain of mountains, which received the pale gleams of the sun, setting in watery clouds.

By this uncertain light we discovered the white buildings of Albano, sprinkled about the steeps. We had not many moments to contemplate them, for it was night when we passed the Torre di mezza via, and began breathing a close pestilential vapour. Half suffocated, and recollecting a variety of terrifying tales about the malaria, we advanced, not without fear, to Veletri, and hardly ventured to fall asleep when arrived there.

November 2nd.—I arose at daybreak, and forgetting fevers and mortalities, ran into a level meadow without the town, whilst the horses were putting to the carriage. Why should I calumniate the air? it seemed purer and more transparent than any I had before inhaled. The mountains were covered with thin mists, and the morning star sparkled above their summits. Birds were twittering amongst some sheds and bushes, which border the sides of the road. A chestnut hung over it, against which I leaned till the chaise came up. Being perfectly alone, and not discovering any trace of the neighbouring city, I fancied myself existing in the ancient days of Hesperia, and hoped to meet Picus in his woods before the evening. But, instead of those shrill clamours which used to echo through the thickets when Pan joined with mortals in the chase, I heard the rumbling of our carriage, and the curses of its postillions. Mounting a horse, I flew before them, and seemed to catch inspiration from the breezes. Now I turned my eyes to the ridge of precipices, in whose grots and caverns

Saturn and his people passed their life; then to the distant ocean. Afar off rose the cliffs, so famous for Circe's incantations, and the whole line of coast, which was once covered with her forests.

Whilst I was advancing with full speed, the sunbeams began to shoot athwart the mountains, the plains to light up by degrees, and their shrubberies of myrtle to glisten with dew-drops. The sea brightened, and the Circean rock soon glowed with purple. I never felt my spirits so exhilarated, and they could not have flowed with more vivacity, even had I tasted the cup which Helen gave Telemachus. You will think me gone wild when I tell you I was, in a manner, drunk with the dews of the morning, and so enraptured with the prospects which lay before me as to address them in verse, and compose charms to dispel the enchantments of Circe. All day were we approaching her rock; towards evening Terracina appeared before us, in a bold romantic site; house above house, and turret looking over turret, on the steeps of a mountain, inclosed with mouldering walls, and crowned by the ruined terraces of a delightful palace: one of those, perhaps, which the luxurious Romans inhabited during the summer, when so free and lofty an exposition (the sea below, with its gales and murmurs) must have been exquisitely agreeable. Groves of orange and citron hang on the declivity, rough with the Indian fig, whose bright red flowers, illuminated by the sun, had a magic splendour. A palm-tree, growing on the highest crag, adds not a little to its singular appearance. Being the largest I had ever seen, and clustered with fruit, I climbed up the rocks to take a close survey of it, and found a spring trickling near its fount, bordered by fresh herbage. On this I stretched myself on the very edge of the precipice, and looking down upon the beach, and glassy plains of ocean, exclaimed with Martial:

> "O nemus! O fontes! solidumque madentis arenæ
> Littus, et æquoreis splendidus Anxur aquis!"

Glancing my eyes athwart the sea, I fixed them on the Circean promontory, which lies right opposite to Terracina, joined to the continent by a very narrow strip of land, and appearing like an island. The roar of the waves lashing the base of the precipices, might still be thought the howl of savage

monsters; but where are those woods which shaded the dome of the goddess? Scarce a tree appears. A few thickets, and but a few, are the sole remains of this once impenetrable vegetation; yet even these I longed to visit, such was my predilection for the spot.

Who knows but Circe might have led me to some other palace, in a more secret and retired vale, where she dwells remote from modern mariners, and the present inhabitants of her environs; universally changed to swine for these many ages? Their metamorphoses being so thoroughly established as to leave no further pretence for her operations, I can imagine her given up to solitude, and the consciousness of her potent influence. Notwithstanding the risks of the adventure, I wished to have attempted it, and seen whether she would have allowed me, as night came on, to warm myself by her cedar fire, and hear her captivating song. Perhaps, had the goddess been propitious, I might have culled some herbs of wondrous efficacy. You recollect, I dare say, how renowned the cliff was for them, and remember that Circe's attendants, deeply skilled, like their mistress, in pharmacy, were continually gathering plants in the woods and wilds which enriched her abode. It was thus the companions of Ulysses found them employed, when, entering her palace, they unwarily drank the beverage she offered. Ovid has told this story in a masterly manner, and formed a lively picture of the magic dome, with the occupations of its inhabitants. We see them judiciously arranging their plants, whilst Circe directs and points out, with the nicest discernment, the simple and compound virtues of every flower.

Descending the cliff, and pursuing our route to Mola along the shore, by a grand road formed on the ruins of the Appian, we drove under an enormous perpendicular rock, standing detached, like a watch-tower, and cut into arsenals and magazines. Day closed just as we got beyond it, and a new moon gleamed faintly on the waters. We saw fires afar off in the bay, some twinkling on the coast, others upon the waves, and heard the murmur of voices; for the night was still and solemn, like that of Cajetas's funeral. I looked anxiously on a sea, where the heroes of the Odyssey and Æneid had sailed in search of fate and empire, then closed my eyes, and dreamed of those illustrious wanderers.

Nine struck when we arrived at Mola di Cajeta. The boats were just coming in (whose lights we had seen out upon the main), and brought such fish as Neptune, I dare say, would have grudged Æneas and Ulysses.

November 3rd.—The morning was soft, but hazy. I walked in a grove of oranges, white with blossoms, and at the same time glowing with fruit, some of which I obtained leave to gather. The spot sloped pleasantly towards the sea, and here I amused myself with my agreeable occupation till the horses were ready, then set off on the Appian, between hedges of myrtle and aloes, catching fresh gales from the sea as I flew along, and breathing the perfume of an aromatic vegetation, which covers the fields on the shore. We observed variety of towns, with battlemented walls and ancient turrets, crowning the pinnacles of rocky steeps, surrounded by wilds, and rude uncultivated mountains. The Liris, now Garigliano, winds its peaceful course through wide extensive meadows, scattered over with the remains of aqueducts, and waters the base of the rocks I have just mentioned. Such a prospect could not fail of bringing Virgil's panegyric of Italy full in my mind:

> "Tot congesta manu præruptis oppida saxis
> Fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia muros."

As soon as we arrived in sight of Capua, the sky darkened, clouds covered the horizon, and presently poured down such deluges of rain as floated the whole country. The gloom was general; Vesuvius disappeared just after we had the pleasure of discovering it; lightning began to flash with dreadful rapidity, and people to run frightened to their houses. At four o'clock darkness universally prevailed, except when a livid glare of lightning presented momentary glimpses of the bay and mountains. We lighted torches, and forded several torrents almost at the hazard of our lives. The fields round Naples were filled with herds, lowing most piteously, and yet not half so much scared as their masters, who ran about cursing and swearing like Indians during the eclipse of the moon. I knew Vesuvius had often put their courage to proof, but little thought of an inundation occasioning such commotions.

For three hours the storm increased in violence, and instead of entering Naples on a calm evening, and viewing its delightful shores by moonlight—instead of finding the squares and

terraces thronged with people and animated by music, we advanced with fear and terror through dark streets totally deserted, every creature being shut up in their houses, and we heard nothing but driving rain, rushing torrents, and the fall of fragments beaten down by their violence. Our inn, like every other habitation, was in great disorder, and we waited a long while before we could settle in our apartments with any comfort. All night the waves roared round the rocky foundations of a fortress beneath my windows, and the lightning played clear in my eyes. I could not sleep, and was full as disturbed as the elements.

November 4th.—Peace was restored to nature in the morning, but every mouth was full of the dreadful accidents which had happened in the night. The sky was cloudless when I awoke, and such was the transparence of the atmosphere that I could clearly discern the rocks, and even some white buildings on the island of Caprea, though at the distance of several miles. A large window fronts my bed, and its casements being thrown open, gives me a vast prospect of ocean, uninterrupted except by the peaks of Caprea and the Cape of Sorento. I lay half an hour gazing on the smooth level waters, and listening to the confused voices of the fishermen, passing and repassing in light skiffs, which came and disappeared in an instant.

Running to the balcony the moment my eyes were fairly open (for till then I saw objects, I know not how, as one does in dreams), I leaned over its rails, and viewed Vesuvius rising distinct into the blue ether, with all that world of gardens and casinos which are scattered about its base; then looked down into the street, deep below, thronged with people in holiday garments, and carriages, and soldiers in full parade. The woody, variegated shore of Posilipo next drew my attention. It was on those very rocks, under those tall pines, Sannazaro was wont to sit by moonlight, or at peep of dawn, holding converse with the Nereids. 'Tis there he still sleeps; and I wished to have gone immediately and strewed coral over his tomb, but I was obliged to check my impatience, and hurry to the palace in form and gala.

A courtly mob had got thither upon the same errand, daubed over with lace and most notably be-periwigged. Nothing but bows and salutations were going forward on the staircase, one of the largest I ever beheld, and which a multitude of prelates

and friars were ascending in all the pomp of awkwardness. I jostled along to the presence chamber, where his Majesty was dining alone in a circular inclosure of fine clothes and smirking faces. The moment he had finished, twenty long necks were poked forth, and it was a glorious struggle amongst some of the most decorated who first should kiss his hand. Doing so was the great business of the day, and everybody pressed forward to the best of their abilities. His Majesty seemed to eye nothing but the end of his nose, which is doubtless a capital object.

Though people have imagined him a weak monarch, I beg leave to differ in opinion, since he has the boldness to prolong his childhood and be happy, in spite of years and conviction. Give him a boar to stab, and a pigeon to shoot at, a battledore or an angling rod, and he is better contented than Solomon in all his glory, and will never discover, like that sapient sovereign, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

His courtiers in general have rather a barbaric appearance, and differ little in the character of their physiognomies from the most savage nations. I should have taken them for Calmucks or Samoieds, had it not been for their dresses and European finery.

You may suppose I was not sorry, after my presentation was over, to return to Sir W.'s and hear Lady H. play, whose music breathes the most pastoral Sicilian ideas, and transports me to green meads on the sea-coast, where I wander with Theocritus.

The evening was passing swiftly away in this delightful excursion of fancy, and I had almost forgotten there was a grand illumination at the theatre of St. Carlo. After traversing a number of dark streets, we suddenly entered this enormous edifice, whose six rows of boxes blazed with tapers. I never beheld such lofty walls of light, nor so pompous a decoration as covered the stage. Marchesi was singing in the midst of all these splendours some of the poorest music imaginable, with the clearest and most triumphant voice, perhaps, in the universe.

It was some time before I could look to any purpose around me, or discover what animals inhabited this glittering world: such was its size and glare. At last I perceived vast numbers of ugly beings, in gold and silver raiment, peeping out of

their boxes. The court being present, a tolerable silence was maintained, but the moment his Majesty withdrew (which great event took place at the beginning of the second act) every tongue broke loose, and nothing but buzz and hubbub filled up the rest of the entertainment.

The last ballet, formed upon the old story of "Le Festin de Pierre," had wonderful effect, and terminated in the most striking perspective of the infernal region. Picq danced incomparably, and Signora Rossi led the Fandango, with a grace and activity that pleased me beyond idea. Music was never more rapturous than that which accompanies this dance. It quite enchanted me, and I longed to have sprung upon the stage. The cadence is so strongly marked by the castanets, that it is almost impossible to be out of time; and the rapidity of steps and varied movements scarcely allows a moment to think of being tired. I should imagine the eternal dance, with which certain tribes of American savages think they are to be rewarded in a future existence, might be formed somewhat on this model. Indeed the Fandango arrived in Spain with the conquerors of the other hemisphere, and is far too lively and extatic to be of European original.

November 6th.—Till to-day we have had nothing but rains; the sea covered with mists, and Caprea invisible. Would you believe it? I have not yet been able to mount to St. Elmo and the Capo di Monte, in order to take a general view of the town.

At length a bright gleam of sunshine roused me from my slumbers, and summoned me to the broad terrace of Chiaja, directly above the waters and commanding the whole coast of Posilipo. Insensibly I drew towards it, and (you know the pace I run when out upon discoveries) soon reached the entrance of the grotto, which lay in dark shades, whilst the crags that lower over it were brightly illumined. Shrubs and vines grow luxuriantly in the crevices of the rock; and their fresh yellow colours, variegated with ivy, have a beautiful effect. To the right a grove of pines sprung from the highest pinnacles: on the left, bay and chestnut conceal the tomb of Virgil, placed on the summit of a cliff which impends over the opening of the grotto, and is fringed with a florid vegetation. Beneath are several wide apertures hollowed in the solid stone, which lead to caverns sixty or seventy feet in depth, where a number of peasants, who were

employed in quarrying, made such a noise with their tools and their voices as almost inclined me to wish the Cimmerians would start from their subterraneous habitations, and sacrifice these profane to the Manes.

Walking out of the sunshine, I seated myself on a loose stone immediately beneath the first gloomy arch of the grotto, and looking down the vast and solemn perspective, terminated by a speck of grey uncertain light, venerated a work which some old chroniclers have imagined as ancient as the Trojan war. 'Twas here the mysterious race I have just mentioned performed their infernal rites, and it was this excavation perhaps which led to their abode.

The Neapolitans attribute a more modern, though full as problematical an origin to their famous cavern, and most piously believe it to have been formed by the enchantments of Virgil, who, as Mr. Addison very justly observes, is better known at Naples in his magical character, than as the author of the Æneid. This strange infatuation most probably arose from the vicinity of the tomb, in which his ashes are supposed to have been deposited; and which, according to popular tradition, was guarded by those very spirits who assisted in constructing the cave. But whatever may have given rise to these ideas, certain it is they were not confined to the lower ranks alone. King Robert,* a wise though far from poetical monarch, conducted his friend Petrarch with great solemnity to the spot; and, pointing to the entrance of the grotto, very gravely asked him, whether he did not adopt the general belief, and conclude this stupendous passage derived its origin from Virgil's powerful incantations? The answer, I think, may easily be conjectured.

When I had sat for some time, contemplating this dusky avenue, and trying to persuade myself that it was hewn by the Cimmerians, I retreated without proceeding any farther, and followed a narrow path which led me, after some windings and turnings, along the brink of the precipice, across a vineyard, to that retired nook of the rocks which shelters Virgil's tomb, most venerably mossed over, and more than half concealed by bushes and vegetation. Drops of dew were distilling from the niches of the little chamber, which once contained his urn,

* Mem. pour la Vie de Petrarque, vol. i., p. 439.

and heaps of withered leaves had gathered on the pavement. Amongst these I crept to eat some grapes and biscuits, having duly scattered a few crumbs as a sort of offering to the invisible guardians of the place. I believe they were sensible of my piety, and, as a reward, kept vagabonds and clowns away.

The one who conducted me remained aloof at awful distance, whilst I sat commercing with the manes of my beloved poet, or straggling about the shrubbery which hangs directly above the mouth of the grot. I wonder I did not visit the eternal shades sooner that I expected, for no squirrel ever skipped from bough to bough more venturously. One instant I climbed up the branches of a chestnut, and sat almost on its extremity, my feet impending over the chasm below; another I boldly advanced to the edge of the rock, and saw crowds of people and carriages, diminished by distance, issuing from the bosom of the mountain, and disappearing almost as soon as discovered in the windings of its road. Having clambered high above the cavern, I hazarded my neck on the top of one of the pines, and looked contemptuously down on the race of pigmies that were so busily moving to and fro. The sun was fiercer than I could have wished, but the sea-breezes fanned me in my aërial situation, which commanded the grand sweep of the bay, varied by convents, palaces, and gardens, mixed with huge masses of rock and crowned by the stately buildings of the Carthusians and fortress of St. Elmo. Add a glittering blue sea to this perspective, with Caprea rising from its bosom, and Vesuvius breathing forth a white column of smoke into the ether, and you will then have a scene upon which I gazed with delight, for more than an hour, almost forgetting that I was perched upon the head of a pine, with nothing but a frail branch to uphold me. However, I descended alive, as Virgil's genii, I am resolved to believe, were my protectors.

LETTER XXIII.

November 8th.—This morning I awoke in the glow of sunshine; the air blew fresh and fragrant; never did I feel more elastic and enlivened. A brisker flow of spirits than I had for many a day experienced, animated me with a desire of rambling

about the shore of Baii, and creeping into caverns and subterraneous chambers. Off I set along Chiaja, and up strange paths which impend over the grotto of Posilipo, amongst the thickets mentioned a letter or two ago; for in my present lively humour, I disdained ordinary roads, and would take paths and ways of my own. A society of kids did not understand what I meant by intruding upon their precipices; and scrambling away, scattered sand and fragments upon the good people that were trudging along the pavement below.

I went on from pine to pine, and thicket to thicket, upon the brink of rapid declivities. My conductor, a shrewd savage, whom Sir William had recommended to me, cheered our route with stories that had passed in the neighbourhood, and traditions about the grot over which we were travelling. I wish you had been of the party, and sat down by us on little smooth spots of sward, where I reclined, scarcely knowing which way caprice was leading me. My mind was full of the tales of the place, and glowed with a vehement desire of exploring the world beyond the grot. I longed to ascend the promontory of Misenus, and follow the same dusky route down which the Sibyl conducted Æneas.

With these dispositions I proceeded; and soon the cliffs and copses opened to views of the Baian bay, with the little isles of Niscita and Lazaretto lifting themselves out of the waters. Procita and Ischia appeared at a distance, invested with that purple bloom so inexpressibly beautiful, and peculiar to this fortunate climate. I hailed the prospect, and blessed the transparent air that gave me life and vigour to run down the rocks, and hie as fast as my savage across the plain to Puzzoli. There we took bark and rowed out into the blue ocean, by the remains of a sturdy mole: many such, I imagine, adorned the bay in Roman ages, crowned by vast lengths of slender pillars; pavilions at their extremities, and taper cypresses spiring above their balustrades: this character of villa occurs very frequently in the paintings of Herculaneum.

We had soon crossed the bay, and landing on a bushy coast, near some fragments of a temple which they say was raised to Hercules, advanced into the country by narrow tracks covered with moss and strewed with shining pebbles; to the right and left, broad masses of luxuriant foliage, chestnut, bay, and ilex, that shelter the ruins of columbariums

and sepulchral chambers, where the dead sleep snug amongst rampant herbage. The region was still, save when a cock crew from the hamlets, which, as well as the tombs, are almost concealed by thickets. No parties of smart Englishmen and connoisseurs were about. I had all the land to myself, and mounted its steeps and penetrated into its recesses, with the importance of a discoverer. What a variety of narrow paths, between banks and shades, did I wildly follow! my savage laughing loud at my odd gestures and useless activity. He wondered I did not scrape the ground for medals, and pocket little bits of plaster, like other plausible young travellers that had gone before me.

After ascending some time, I followed him into the Piscina Mirabilis, the wondrous reservoir which Nero constructed to supply his fleet, when anchored in the neighbouring bay. 'Tis a grand labyrinth of solid vaults and pillars, as you well know, but you cannot conceive the partial gleams of sunshine which played on the arches, nor the variety of roots and ivies trailing from the cove. A noise of trickling waters prevailed, that had almost lulled me to sleep as I rested myself on the celandine which carpets the floor; but curiosity urging me forward, I gained the upper air; walked amongst woods a few minutes, and then into grots and dismal excavations (prisons they call them), which began to weary me.

After having gone up and down in this manner for some time, we at last reached an eminence that looked over the Mare Morto, and Elysian fields trembling with poplars. The Dead Lake, a faithful emblem of eternal tranquillity, looked deep and solemn. A few peasants were passing along its margin, their shadows reflected on the water: all was serene and peaceful. Turning from the lake I espied a rock at about a league distant, whose summit was clad with verdure, and finding this to be the promontory of Misenus, I immediately set my face to that quarter.

We passed several dirty villages, inhabited by an ill-favoured generation, infamous for depredations and murders. Their gardens, however, discover some marks of industry; the fields are separated by neat hedges of cane, and corn seemed to flourish in the inclosures.

I walked on with slowness and deliberation, musing at every step, and stopping ever and anon to rest myself by springs and

tufted bay-trees; when insensibly we began to leave the cultivated lands behind us, and to lose ourselves in shady wilds, which, to all appearance, no mortal had ever trodden. Here were no paths, no enclosures; a primeval rudeness characterized the whole scene,—

"Juvat arva videre,
Non rastris, hominum non ulli obnoxia curæ."

The idea of going almost out of the world, soothed the tone of mind into which a variety of affecting recollections had thrown me. I formed conjectures about the promontory to which we were tending; and when I cast my eyes around the savage landscape, transported myself four thousand years into antiquity, and half persuaded myself I was one of Æneas's companions. After forcing our way about a mile through glades of shrubs and briars, we entered a verdant opening at the base of the cliff which takes its name from Misenus. The poets of the Augustan age would have celebrated such a meadow with the warmest raptures; they would have discovered a nymph in every flower, and detected a dryad under every tree. Doubtless imagination never formed a lovelier prospect. Here were clear streams and grassy hillocks, leafy shrubs and cypresses spiring out of their bosom,—

"Et circum irriguo surgebant lilia prato
Candida purpureis mista papaveribus."

But as it is not the lot of human animals to be contented, instead of reposing in the vale, I scaled the rock, and was three parts dissolved in attaining its summit,—a flat spot covered with herbage, where I lay contemplating the ocean, and fanned by its breezes. The sun darted upon my head; I wished to avoid its immediate influence: no tree was near. Deep below lay the pleasant valley: 'twas a long way to descend. Looking round and round, I spied something like a hut, under a crag on the edge of a dark fissure. Might I avail myself of its covert? My conductor answered in the affirmative, and added that it was inhabited by a good old woman, who never refused a cup of milk, or slice of bread, to refresh a weary traveller.

Thirst and fatigue urged me speedily down an intervening slope of stunted myrtle. Though oppressed with heat, I could

not help deviating a few steps from the direct path to notice the uncouth rocks which rose frowning on every quarter. Above the hut, their appearance was truly formidable; dark ivy crept among the crevices, and dwarf aloes with sharp spines, such as Lucifer himself might be supposed to have sown. Indeed, I knew not whether I was not approaching some gate that leads to his abode, as I drew near a gulph (the fissure lately mentioned) and heard the hollow gusts which were imprisoned below. The savage, my guide, shuddered as he passed by to apprise the old woman of my coming. I felt strangely, and stared around me, and but half liked my situation. To say truth, I wished myself away, and heartily regretted the green vale.

In the midst of my doubts, forth tottered the old woman. "You are welcome," said she, in a feeble voice, but a better dialect than I had heard in the neighbourhood. Her look was more humane, and she seemed of a superior race to the inhabitants of the surrounding valleys. My savage treated her with peculiar deference. She had just given him some bread, with which he retired to a respectful distance, bowing to the earth. I caught the mode, and was very obsequious, thinking myself on the point of experiencing a witch's influence, and gaining, perhaps, some insight into the volume of futurity. She smiled at my agitation, and kept beckoning me into the cottage.

"Now," thought I to myself, "I am upon the verge of an adventure. O Quixote! O Sylvio di Rosalva! how would ye have strutted in such a situation! What fair Infantas would ye not have expected to behold, condemned to spinning wheels, and solitude?" I, alas! saw nothing but clay walls, a straw bed, some glazed earthen bowls, and a wooden crucifix. My shoes were loaded with sand: this my hostess perceived, and immediately kindling a fire in an inner part of the hovel, brought out some warm water to refresh my feet, and set some milk and chestnuts before me. This patriarchal politeness was by no means indifferent after my tiresome ramble. I sat down opposite to the door which fronted the unfathomable gulph; beyond appeared the sea, of a deep cerulean, foaming with waves. The sky also was darkening apace with storms. Sadness came over me like a cloud, and I looked up to the old woman for consolation.

"And you too are sorrowful, young stranger," said she, "that come from the gay world! How must I feel, who pass year after year in these lonely mountains?" I answered that the weather affected me, and my spirits were exhausted by the walk.

All the while I spoke she looked at me with such a melancholy earnestness that I asked the cause, and began again to imagine myself in some fatal habitation,

"Where more is meant than meets the ear."

Said she, "Your features are wonderfully like those of an unfortunate young person, who, in this retirement . . . ." The tears began to fall as she pronounced these words; she seemed older than before, and bent to the ground with sorrow. My curiosity was fired. "Tell me," continued I, "what you mean? who was this youth for whom you are so interested? and why did he seclude himself in this wild region? Your kindness might no doubt alleviate, in some measure, the horrors of the place; but may God defend me from passing the night near such a gulph! I would not trust myself in a despairing moment."

"It is," said she, "a place of horrors. I tremble to relate what has happened on this very spot; but your manner interests me, and though I am little given to narrations, for once I will unlock my lips concerning the secrets of yonder fatal chasm.

"I was born in a distant part of Italy, and have known better days. In my youth fortune smiled upon my family, but in a few years they withered away; no matter by what accident. I am not going, however, to talk of myself. Have patience a few moments! A series of unfortunate events reduced me to indigence, and drove me to this desert, where, from rearing goats and making their milk into cheese, by a different method than is common in the Neapolitan State, I have, for about thirty years, prolonged a sorrowful existence. My silent grief and constant retirement had made me appear to some a saint, and to others a sorceress. The slight knowledge I have of plants has been exaggerated, and, some years back, the hours I gave up to prayer, and the recollection of former friends, lost to me for ever! were cruelly intruded upon by the idle and the ignorant. But soon I sank into

obscurity; my little recipes were disregarded, and you are the first stranger who, for these twelve months past, has visited my abode. Ah, would to God its solitude had ever remained inviolate!

"It is now three-and-twenty years," and she looked upon some characters cut on the planks of the cottage, "since I was sitting by moonlight, under that cliff you view to the right, my eyes fixed on the ocean, my mind lost in the memory of my misfortunes, when I heard a step, and starting up, a figure stood before me. It was a young man, in a rich habit, with streaming hair, and looks that bespoke the utmost terror. I knew not what to think of this sudden apparition. 'Mother,' said he with faltering accents, 'let me rest under your roof; and deliver me not up to those who thirst after my blood. Take this gold; take all, all!'

"Surprise held me speechless; the purse fell to the ground; the youth stared wildly on every side: I heard many voices beyond the rocks; the wind bore them distinctly, but presently they died away. I took courage, and assured the youth my cot should shelter him. 'Oh! thank you, thank you!' answered he, and pressed my hand. He shared my scanty provision.

"Overcome with toil (for I had worked hard in the day), sleep closed my eyes for a short interval. When I awoke the moon was set, but I heard my unhappy guest sobbing in darkness. I disturbed him not. Morning dawned, and he was fallen into a slumber. The tears bubbled out of his closed eyelids, and coursed one another down his wan cheeks. I had been too wretched myself not to respect the sorrows of another: neglecting therefore my accustomed occupations, I drove away the flies that buzzed around his temples. His breast heaved high with sighs, and he cried loudly in his sleep for mercy.

"The beams of the sun dispelling his dream, he started up like one that had heard the voice of an avenging angel, and hid his face with his hands. I poured some milk down his parched throat. 'Oh, mother!' he exclaimed, 'I am a wretch unworthy of compassion; the cause of innumerable sufferings; a murderer! a parricide!' My blood curdled to hear a stripling utter such dreadful words, and behold such agonising sighs swell in so young a bosom; for I marked the

sting of conscience urging him to disclose what I am going to relate.

"It seems he was of high extraction, nursed in the pomps and luxuries of Naples, the pride and darling of his parents, adorned with a thousand lively talents, which the keenest sensibility conspired to improve. Unable to fix any bounds to whatever became the object of his desires, he passed his first years in roving from one extravagance to another, but as yet there was no crime in his caprices.

"At length it pleased Heaven to visit his family, and make their idol the slave of an unworthy passion. He had a friend, who from his birth had been devoted to his interest, and placed all his confidence in him. This friend loved to distraction a young creature, the most graceful of her sex (as I can witness), and she returned his affection. In the exultation of his heart, he showed her to the wretch whose tale I am about to tell. He sickened at her sight. She too caught fire at his glances. They languished—they consumed away—they conversed, and his persuasive language finished what his guilty glances had begun.

"Their flame was soon discovered, for he disdained to conceal a thought, however dishonourable. The parents warned the youth in the tenderest manner; but advice and prudent counsels were to him so loathsome, that unable to contain his rage, and infatuated with love, he menaced the life of his friend as the obstacle of his enjoyment. Coolness and moderation were opposed to violence and frenzy, and he found himself treated with a contemptuous gentleness. Stricken to the heart, he wandered about for some time like one entranced. Meanwhile the nuptials were preparing; and the lovely girl he had perverted found ways to let him know she was about to be torn from his embraces.

"He raved, and rousing his dire spirit, applied to a malignant dæmon who sold the most inveterate poisons. These he presented, like a cup of pure iced water, to his friend, and to his own affectionate father. They drank the draught, and soon began to pine. He marked the progress of their dissolution with a horrid firmness. He let the moment pass beyond which all antidotes were vain. His friend expired; and the young criminal, though he beheld the dews of death hang on his parent's forehead, yet stretched not forth his hand. In a

short space the miserable father breathed his last, whilst his son was sitting aloof in the same chamber.

"The sight overcame him. He felt, for the first time, the pangs of remorse. His agitation passed not unnoticed. He was watched: suspicions beginning to unfold, he took alarm, and one evening escaped; but not without previously informing the partner of his crimes which way he intended to flee. Several pursued; but the inscrutable will of Providence blinded their search, and I was doomed to behold the effects of celestial vengeance.

"Such are the chief circumstances of the tale I gathered from the youth. I swooned whilst he related it, and could take no sustenance. One whole day afterwards did I pray the Lord, that I might die rather than be near an incarnate demon. With what indignation did I now survey that slender form and those flowing tresses, which had interested me before so much in his behalf!

"No sooner did he perceive the change in my countenance, than sullenly retiring to yonder rock, he sat careless of the sun and scorching winds; for it was now the summer solstice. Equally was he heedless of the unwholesome dews. When midnight came my horrors were augmented; and I meditated several times to abandon my hovel, and fly to the next village; but a power more than human chained me to the spot and fortified my mind.

"I slept, and it was late next morning when some one called at the wicket of the little fold, where my goats are penned. I arose, and saw a peasant of my acquaintance leading a female strangely muffled up, and casting her eyes on the ground. My heart misgave me. I thought this was the very maid who had been the cause of such unheard-of wickedness. Nor were my conjectures ill-founded. Regardless of the clown who stood by in stupid astonishment, she fell to the earth and bathed my hand with tears. Her trembling lips with difficulty inquired after the youth; and, as she spoke, a glow of conscious guilt lightened up her pale countenance.

"The full recollection of her lover's crimes shot through my memory. I was incensed, and would have spurned her away; but she clung to my garments and seemed to implore my pity with a look so full of misery, that, relenting, I led her in silence to the extremity of the cliff where the youth was seated, his

feet dangling above the sea. His eye was rolling wildly around, but it soon fixed upon the object for whose sake he had doomed himself to perdition.

"I am not inclined to describe their ecstasies, or the eagerness with which they sought each other's embraces. I turned indignantly my head; and, driving my goats to a recess amongst the rocks, sat revolving in my mind these strange events. I neglected procuring any provision for my unwelcome guests; and about midnight returned homewards by the light of the moon, which shone serenely in the heavens. Almost the first object her beams discovered was the guilty maid sustaining the head of her lover, who had fainted through weakness and want of nourishment. I fetched some dry bread, and, dipping it in milk, laid it before them. Having performed this duty I set open the door of my hut, and retiring to a neighbouring cavity, there stretched myself on a heap of leaves, and offered my prayers to Heaven.

"A thousand fears, till this moment unknown, thronged into my fancy. I mistook the shadow of leaves, that chequered the entrance to the grot, for ugly reptiles, and repeatedly shook my garments. The flow of the distant surges was deepened by my apprehensions into distant groans: in a word, I could not rest; but issuing from the cavern as hastily as my trembling knees would allow, paced along the edge of the precipice. An unaccountable impulse hurried my steps. Dark clouds were driving across the sky, and the setting moon was flushed with the deepest crimson. A wan gleam coloured the sea. Such was my terror and shivering, that, unable to advance to my hut or retreat to the cavern, I was about to shield myself from the night in a sandy crevice, when a loud shriek pierced my ear. My fears had confused me; I was in fact hard by my hovel, and scarcely three paces from the brink of the cavern: it was from thence the cries proceeded.

"Advancing in a cold shudder to its edge, part of which was newly crumbled in, I discovered the form of the young man suspended by one foot to a branch of juniper that grew ten feet down: thus dreadfully did he hang over the gulph from the branch bent with his weight. His features were distorted, his eye-balls glared with agony, and his screams became so shrill and terrible, that I lost all power of assistance. Fixed, I stood with my eyes riveted upon the criminal, who

incessantly cried out, 'O God! O Father! save me, if there be yet mercy! save me, or I sink into the abyss!'

"I am convinced he saw me not; for not once did he implore my help. My heart was dead within me. I called out upon the Lord. His voice grew faint, and as I gazed intent upon him, he fell into utter darkness. I sank to the earth in a trance, during which a sound like the rush of pennons assaulted my ear: methought the evil spirit was bearing off his soul; I lifted up my eyes, but nothing stirred; the stillness that prevailed was awful.

"The moon looked stained with streaks of blood; her orb hanging low over the waves afforded a sickly light, by which I perceived some one coming down that white cliff you see before you; and soon I heard the voice of the young woman calling aloud on her guilty lover. She stopped. She repeated again and again her exclamation; but there was no reply. Alarmed and frantic she hurried along the path, and now I saw her on the promontory, and now by yonder pine, devouring with her glances every crevice in the rock. At length perceiving me, she flew to where I stood, by the fatal precipice, and having noticed the fragments fresh crumbled in, pored importunately on my countenance. I continued pointing to the chasm; she trembled not; her tears could not flow; but she divined the meaning. 'He is lost!' said she; 'the earth has swallowed him! but, as I have shared with him the highest joy, so will I partake his torments. I will follow; dare not to hinder me.' I shrank back.

"Like the phantoms I have seen in dreams, she glanced beside me; and, clasping her hands above her head, lifted a steadfast look on the hemisphere, and viewed the moon with an anxiousness that told me she was bidding it farewell for ever. Observing a silken handkerchief on the ground, with which she had but an hour ago bound her lover's temples, she snatched it up, and imprinting it with burning kisses, thrust it into her bosom. Once more, expanding her arms in the last act of despair and miserable passion, she threw herself, with a furious leap, into the gulph.

"To its margin I crawled on my knees, and, shuddering, looked down into the gloom. There I remained in the most dreadful darkness; for now the moon was sunk, the sky obscured with storms, and a tempestuous blast ranging the

ocean. Showers poured thick upon me, and the lightning, in clear and frequent flashes, gave me terrifying glimpses of yonder accursed chasm.

"Stranger, dost thou believe in the great Being? in our Redeemer? in the tenets of our faith?" I answered with reverence, but said I was no Catholic. "Then," continued the aged woman, "I will not declare before a heretic what were the sacred visions of that night of vengeance!" She paused; I was silent.

After a short interval, with deep and frequent sighs, she resumed her narrative. "Daylight began to dawn as if with difficulty, and it was late before its radiance had tinged the watery and tempestuous clouds. I was still kneeling by the gulph in prayer when the cliffs began to brighten, and the beams of the morning sun to strike against me. Then did I rejoice. Then no longer did I think myself of all human beings the most abject and miserable. How different did I feel myself from those, fresh plunged into the abodes of torment, and driven for ever from the morning!

"Three days elapsed in total solitude: on the fourth, some grave and ancient persons arrived from Naples, who questioned me, repeatedly, about the wretched lovers, and to whom I related their fate with every dreadful particular. Soon after I learned that all discourse concerning them was expressly stopped, and that no prayers were offered up for their souls."

With these words, as well as I recollect, the old woman ended her singular narration. My blood thrilled as I walked by the gulph to call my guide, who stood aloof under the cliffs. He seemed to think, from the paleness of my countenance, that I had heard some gloomy prediction, and shook his head when I turned round to bid my old hostess adieu! It was a melancholy evening, and I could not refrain from tears, as, winding through the defiles of the rocks, the sad scenes which had passed amongst them recurred to my memory.

Traversing a wild thicket, we soon regained the shore, where I rambled a few minutes whilst the peasant went for the boatmen. The last streaks of light were quivering on the waters when I stepped into the bark, and wrapping myself up in an awning, slept till we reached Puzzoli, some of whose inhabitants came forth with torches to light us home.

I was vexed to be roused from my visions, and had much rather have sunk in some deep cave of the Cimmerians than returned to Naples.

LETTER XXIV.

NAPLES, *November 9th.*

We made our excursion to Pompeii, passing through Portici, and over the last lava of Mount Vesuvius. I experienced a strange mixture of sensations, on surveying at once the mischiefs of the late eruption, in the ruin of villages, farms, and vineyards; and all around them the most luxuriant and delightful scenery of nature. It was impossible to resist the impressions of melancholy from viewing the former, or not to admit that gaiety of spirits which was inspired by the sight of the latter. I say nothing of the Museum at Portici, which we saw in our way, on account of the ample description of its contents already given to the public, and because it should be described no otherwise than by an exact catalogue, or by an exhibition of engravings. An hour and half brought us from this celebrated repository to Pompeii. Nothing can be conceived more delightful than the climate and situation of this city. It stands upon a gently-rising hill, which commands the bay of Naples, with the islands of Caprea and Ischia, the rich coasts of Sorento, the tower of Castel a Mare; and on the other side, Mount Vesuvius, with the lovely country intervening. It is judged to be about an Italian mile long, and three and a half in circuit. We entered the city at the little gate which lies towards Stabiæ. The first object upon entering is a colonnade round a square court, which seems to have formed a place of arms. Behind the colonnade is a series of little rooms, destined for the soldiers' barracks. The columns are of stone, plaistered with stucco and coloured. On several of them we found names scratched in Greek and Latin; probably those of the soldiers who had been quartered there. Helmets and armour for various parts of the body were discovered amongst the skeletons of some soldiers, whose hard fate had compelled them to wait on duty, at the perilous moment of the city's approaching destruction. Dolphins and tridents, sculptured in relief on most of these relics of armour,

seem to show that they had been fabricated for naval service. Some of the sculptures on the arms, probably belonging to officers, exhibit a greater variety of ornaments. The taking of Troy, wrought on one of the helmets, is beautifully executed; and much may be said in commendation of the work of several others.

We were next led to the remains of a temple and altar near these barracks. From thence to some rooms floored (as indeed were almost all that have been cleared from the rubbish) with tesselated mosaic pavements of various patterns, and most of them of very excellent execution. Many of these have been taken up, and now form the floors of the rooms in the Museum at Portici, whose best ornaments of every kind are furnished from the discoveries at Pompeii. From the rooms just mentioned we descended into a subterraneous chamber, communicating with a bathing apartment. It appears to have served as a kind of office to the latter. It was probably here that the clothes used in bathing were washed. A fireplace, a capacious cauldron of bronze, and earthen vessels, proper for that purpose, found here, have given rise to the conjecture. Contiguous to this room is a small circular one with a fireplace, which was the stove to the bath. I should not forget to tell you that the skeleton of the poor laundress (for so the antiquaries will have it), who was very diligently washing the bathing clothes at the time of the eruption, was found lying in an attitude of most resigned death, not far from the washing cauldron in the office just mentioned.

We were now conducted to the temple, or rather chapel, of Isis. The chief remains are a covered cloister; the great altar on which was probably exhibited the statue of the goddess; a little edifice to protect the sacred well; the pediment of the chapel, with a symbolical vase in relief; ornaments in stucco, on the front of the main building, consisting of the lotus, the sistrum, representations of gods, Harpocrates, Anubis, and other objects of Egyptian worship. The figures on one side of this temple are Perseus with the Gorgon's head; on the other side, Mars and Venus, with Cupids bearing the arms of Mars. We next observe three altars of different sizes. On one of them is said to have been found the bones of a victim unconsumed, the last sacrifice having probably been stopped by the dreadful calamity which had occasioned it. From

a niche in the temple was taken a statue of marble: a woman pressing her lips with her forefinger. Within the area is a well, where the priest threw the ashes of the sacrifices. We saw in the Museum at Portici some lovely arabesque paintings, cut from the walls of the cloister. The foliage which ran round the whole sweep of the cloister itself is in the finest taste. A tablet of basalt with Egyptian hieroglyphics was transported from thence to Portici, together with the following inscription, taken from the front gate of the chapel:

N. POPIDUS N. F. CELSINUS.
AEDEM ISIDIS TERRAE MOTU COLLAPSAM
A FUNDAMENTO P. SUA RESTITUIT
HUNC DECURIONES OB LIBERALITATEM
CUM ESSET ANNORUM SEX ORDINI SUO
GRATIS ADLEGERUNT.

Behind one of the altars we saw a small room, in which, our guide informed us, a human skeleton had been discovered, with some fish bones on a plate near it, and a number of other culinary utensils. We then passed on to another apartment, almost contiguous, where nothing more remarkable had been found than an iron crow: an instrument with which perhaps the unfortunate wretch, whose skeleton I have mentioned above, had vainly endeavoured to extricate herself, this room being probably barricaded by the matter of the eruption. This temple, rebuilt, as the inscription imports, by N. Popidius, had been thrown down by a terrible earthquake, that likewise destroyed a great part of the city (sixteen years before the famous eruption of Vesuvius described by Pliny, which happened in the first year of Titus, A.D. 79) and buried at once both Herculaneum and Pompeii. As I lingered alone in these environs sacred to Isis, some time after my companions had quitted them, I fell into one of those reveries which my imagination is so fond of indulging; and transporting myself seventeen hundred years back, fancied I was sailing with the elder Pliny, on the first day's eruption, from Misenum, towards Retina and Herculaneum; and afterwards towards the villa of his friend Pomponianus at Stabiæ. The course of our galley seldom carried us out of sight of Pompeii, and as often as I could divert my attention from the tremendous spectacle of the

eruption, its enormous pillar of smoke standing conically in the air, and tempests of liquid fire continually bursting out from the midst of it, then raining down the sides of the mountain, and flooding this beautiful coast with innumerable streams of red-hot lava, methought I turned my eyes upon this fair city, whose houses, villas, and gardens, with their long ranges of columned courts and porticos, were made visible through the universal cloud of ashes, by lightning from the mountain; and saw its distracted inhabitants, men, women, and children, running to and fro in despair. But in one spot, I mean the court and precincts of the temple, glared a continual light. It was the blaze of the altars; towards which I discerned a long-robed train of priests moving in solemn procession, to supplicate by prayer and sacrifice, at this destructive moment, the intervention of Isis, who had taught the first fathers of mankind the culture of the earth, and other arts of civil life. Methought I could distinguish in their hands all those paintings and images, sacred to this divinity, brought out on this portentous occasion, from the subterraneous apartments and mystic cells of the temple. There was every form of creeping thing and abominable beast, every Egyptian pollution which the true prophet had seen in vision, among the secret idolatries of the temple at Jerusalem. The priests arrived at the altars; I saw them gathered round, and purifying the three at once with the sacred meal; then, all moving slowly about them, each with his right hand towards the fire: it was the office of some to seize the firebrands of the altars, with which they sprinkled holy water on the numberless bystanders. Then began the prayers, the hymns, and lustrations of the sacrifice. The priests had laid the victims with their throats downward upon the altars; were ransacking the baskets of flour and salt for the knives of slaughter, and proceeding in haste to the accomplishment of their pious ceremonies;—when one of our company, who thought me lost, returned with impatience, and calling me off to some new object, put an end to my strange reverie. We were now summoned to pay some attention to the scene and corridor of a theatre, not far from the temple. Little more of its remains being yet cleared away, we hastened back to a small house and garden in the neighbourhood of Isis. Sir W. Hamilton (in his account of Pompeii communicated to the Society of Antiquaries), when speaking of this

house, having taken occasion to give a general idea of the private mansions of the ancient citizens, I shall take the liberty of transcribing the whole passage. "A covered cloister, supported by columns, goes round the house, as was customary in many of the houses at Pompeii. The rooms in general are very small, and in one, where an iron bedstead was found, the wall had been pared away to make room for this bedstead; so that it was not six feet square, and yet this room was most elegantly painted, and had a tesselated or mosaic floor. The weight of the matter erupted from Mount Vesuvius has universally damaged the upper parts of the houses; the lower parts are mostly found as fresh as at the moment they were buried. The plan of most of the houses at Pompeii is a square court, with a fountain in the middle, and small rooms round, communicating with that court. By the construction and distribution of the houses, it seems, the inhabitants of Pompeii were fond of privacy. They had few windows towards the street, except where, from the nature of the plan, they could not avoid it; but even in that case the windows were placed too high for anyone in the streets to overlook them. Their houses nearly resemble each other, both as to distribution of plan, and in the manner of finishing the apartments. The rooms are in general small, from ten to twelve feet, and from fourteen to eighteen feet; few communications between room and room, almost all without windows, except the apartments situated to the gardens, which are thought to have been allotted to the women. Their cortiles, or courts, were often surrounded by porticos, even in very small houses; not but there were covered galleries before the doors of their apartments to afford shade and shelter. No timber was used in finishing their apartments, except in doors and windows. The floors were generally laid in mosaic work. One general taste prevailed of painting the sides and ceilings of the rooms. Small figures and medallions of low relief were sometimes introduced. Their great variety consisted in the colours, and in the choice and delicacy of the ornaments, in which they displayed great harmony and taste. Their houses were some two, others three stories high."

We now pursued our way through what is with some probability thought to have been the principal street. Its narrowness, however, surprised me. It is scarcely eleven feet wide,

clear of the footways raised on each side of it. The pavement is formed of a large sort of flattish-surfaced pebbles; not laid down with the greatest evenness or regularity. The sideways may be about a yard wide, each paved, irregularly enough, with small stones. There are guard stones at equal intervals, to defend the foot passengers from carriages and horses. I cannot say I found anything either elegant or pleasant in the effect of this open street. But, as the houses in general present little more than a dead wall towards it, I do not imagine any views, beyond mere use and convenience, were consulted in the plan. It led us, however, through the principal gate or entrance, to a sort of Villa Rustica, without the limits of the city, which amply recompensed our curiosity. The arcade surrounding a square garden, or courtyard, offers itself first to the observer's notice. Into this open a number of coved rooms, adorned with paintings of figures and arabesques. These rooms, though small, have a rich and elegant appearance, their ornaments being very well executed, and retaining still their original freshness. On the top of the arcade runs a walk or open terrace, leading to the larger apartments of the higher story. One of the rooms below has a capacious bow-window, where several panes of glass, somewhat shattered, were found, but in sufficient preservation to show that the ancients were not without knowledge of this species of manufacture. As Horace and most of the old Latin Poets dwell much on the praises of ancient conviviality, and appear to have valued themselves considerably on their connoisseurship in wine, it was with great pleasure I descended into the spacious cellars, sunk and vaulted beneath the arcade above-mentioned. Several earthen amphoræ were standing in rows against the walls, but the Massic and Falernian with which they were once stored, had probably long been totally absorbed by the earth and ashes, which were now the sole contents of these venerable jars. The ancients are thought to have used oil, instead of corks, and that the stoppers were of some matter that could make but little resistance, seems confirmed by the entrance of that, which now supplied the place with wine. The skeletons of several of the family who had possessed this villa were discovered in the cellar, together with brass and silver coins, and many such ornaments of dress as were of more durable materials. On re-ascending, we went to the hot and cold

baths; thence to the back of the villa, separated by a passage from the more elegant part of the house; we were shown some rooms which had been occupied by the farmer, and from whence several implements of agriculture had been carried, to enrich the collection at Portici. On the whole, the plan and construction of this villa are extremely curious, and its situation very happily chosen. I could not, however, help feeling some regret, in not having had the good fortune to be present at the first discovery. It must have been highly interesting to see all its ancient relics (the greatest part of which are now removed) each in its proper place; or, at least, in the place they had possessed for so long a course of years. His Sicilian Majesty has ordered a correct draught of this villa to be taken, which, it is hoped, will one day be published, with a complete account of all the discoveries at Pompeii.

Our next walk was to see the Columbarium, a very solemn looking edifice, where probably the families of higher rank only at Pompeii, deposited the urns of their deceased kindred. Several of these urns, with their ashes, and one among the rest of glass, inclosed in another of earth, were dug out of the sepulchral vaults. A quantity of marble statues, of but ordinary execution, and colossal masks of terra-cotta, constituted the chief ornaments of the Columbarium. It is situated without the gates, on the same side of the city as the villa just described. There is something characteristically sad in its aspect. It threw my mind into a melancholy, but not disagreeable tone. Under the mixed sentiments it inspired, I cast one lingering look back on the whole affecting scene of ruins, over which I had for several hours been rambling, and quitted it to return to Naples, not without great reluctance.

LETTER XXV.

ROME, *December 9th.*

My last letter was despatched in such a hurry that I had not time to conclude it. This will be nearly as imperfect; but yet I cannot forbear writing, having the vanity to believe that you are pleased with hearing only that I am well.

Your friend H. walked with me this morning in the Loggios of Raffaelle, and we went afterwards to the Capitol.

Nothing delighted me more in the whole treasury of sculptures, than a figure in alto relievo of Endymion, reclined on the mountain's brow: his head falls upon his breast with an ease and gracefulness, of which the Greeks alone had ever a true conception. Most of the chambers, if you recollect, are filled with the elegant remains of Adrian's collection. The villa of that classic emperor at Tivoli, must have been the most charming of structures. Having travelled into various and remote parts of his empire, he assembled their most valuable ornaments on one spot. Some of his apartments were filled with the mysterious images and symbols of Egypt: others with Eastern tripods and strange Adriatic vases. Though enraptured with St. Peter's and the Vatican, with the gardens and groves of pine, that surround this interesting city, still I cannot help sighing after my native hills and copses, which look (I know not how it happens) more like the haunts of Pan than any I have seen in Italy. I eagerly anticipate the placid hours we shall pass, perhaps next summer, on the wild range which belongs to our sylvan deities. In their deep fastnesses I will hide myself from the world, and never allow its glare to bicker through my foliage. You will follow me, I trust, into retirement, and equally forget the turmoils of mankind. What have we children of the good Sylvanus to do with the miseries or triumphs of the savages that prowl about London? Let us forget there exists such a city, and when reposing amongst ivy and blossoms of bloom, imagine ourselves in the ancient dominions of Saturn, and dream that we see him pass along with his rustic attendants.

LETTER XXVI.

AUGSBURG, *January 20th*, 1781.

For these ten days past have I been traversing Lapland: winds whistling in my ears, and cones showering down upon my head from the wilds of pine through which our route conducted us. Often were we obliged to travel by moonlight, and I leave you to imagine the awful aspect of the Tyrol mountains buried in snow.

I scarcely ventured to utter an exclamation of surprise,

though prompted by some of the most striking scenes in nature, lest I should interrupt the sacred silence that prevails, during winter, in these boundless solitudes. The streams are frozen, and mankind petrified, for aught I know to the contrary, since whole days have we journeyed on without perceiving the slightest hint of their existence.

I never before felt the pleasure of discovering a smoke rising from a cottage, or of hearing a heifer lowing in its stall; and could not have supposed there was so much satisfaction in perceiving two or three fur caps, with faces under them, peeping out of their concealments. I wish you had been with me, exploring this savage region: wrapped up in our bear-skins, we should have followed its secret avenues, and penetrated, perhaps, into some enchanted cave lined with sables, where, like the heroes of northern romances, we should have been waited upon by dwarfs, and sung drowsily to repose. I think it no bad scheme to sleep away five or six years to come, since every hour affairs are growing more and more turbulent. Well, let them! provided we may enjoy, in security, the shades of our thickets.

ADDITIONAL LETTERS.

[The following Letters, written in a second Excursion, which was interrupted by a dangerous illness, are added on account of their affinity to some of the preceding.]

LETTER I.

COLOGNE, *May 28th*, 1782.

THIS is the first day of summer; the oak leaves expand, the roses blow, butterflies are about, and I have spirits enough to write to you. We have had clouded skies this fortnight past, and roads like the Slough of Despond. Last Wednesday we were benighted on a dismal plain, apparently boundless. The moon cast a sickly gleam, and now and then a blue meteor glided along the morass which lay before us.

After much difficulty we gained an avenue, and in an hour's time discovered something like a gateway, shaded by crooked elms and crowned by a cluster of turrets. Here we paused and knocked; no one answered. We repeated our knocks; the stout oaken gate returned a hollow sound; the horses coughed, their riders blew their horns. At length the bars fell, and we entered—by what means I am ignorant, for no human being appeared.

A labyrinth of narrow winding alleys, dark as the vaults of a cathedral, opened to our view. We kept wandering along, at least twenty minutes, between lofty mansions with grated windows, and strange galleries, projecting one over another, from which depended innumerable uncouth figures and crosses, in iron-work, swinging to and fro with the wind. At the end of this gloomy maze we found a long street, not fifteen feet wide, I am certain; the houses still loftier than those in the alleys, the windows thicker barred, and the gibbets (for I know not what else to call them) more frequent. Here and

there we saw lights glimmering in the highest stories, and arches on the right and left, which seemed to lead into retired courts and deeper darkness.

Along one of these recesses we were jumbled, over such pavement as I hope you may never tread upon; and, after parading round it, went out at the same arch whence we came in. This procession seemed at first very mystical, but it was too soon accounted for by our postillions, who confessed they had lost their way. A council was held amongst them in form, and then we struck into another labyrinth of hideous edifices, habitations I will not venture to call them, as not a creature stirred; though the rumbling of our carriages was echoed by all the vaults and arches.

Towards midnight we rested a few minutes, and a head poking out of a casement directed us to the hotel of Der Heilige Geist, where an apartment, thirty feet square, was prepared for our reception.

LETTER II.

INSPRUCK, *June 4th.*

No sooner had we passed Fuezen than we entered the Tyrol, and the country of wonders. Those lofty peaks, those steeps of wood I delight in, lay before us. Innumerable clear springs gush out on every side, overhung by luxuriant shrubs in blossom. The day was mild, though overcast, and a soft blue vapour rested upon the hills, above which rise mountains that bear plains of snow into the clouds.

At night we lay at Nasariet, a village buried amongst savage promontories. The next morning we advanced, in bright sunshine, into smooth lawns on the slopes of mountains, scattered over with larches, whose delicate foliage formed a light green veil to the azure sky. Flights of birds were merrily travelling from spray to spray. I ran delighted into this world of boughs, whilst C. sat down to draw the huts which are scattered about for the shelter of herds, and discover themselves amongst the groves in the most picturesque manner.

These little edifices are uncommonly neat, and excite those ideas of pastoral life to which I am so fondly attached. The turf from whence they rise is enamelled, in the strict sense of the word, with flowers. A sort of bluebell predominated,

brighter than ultramarine; here and there auriculas looked out of the moss, and I often reposed upon tufts of ranunculus. Bushes of phillerea were very frequent, the sun shining full on their glossy leaves. An hour passed away swiftly in these pleasant groves, where I lay supine under a lofty fir, a tower of leaves and branches.

LETTER III.

PADUA, *June 14th.*

Once more, said I to myself, I shall have the delight of beholding Venice; so got into an open chaise, the strangest curricle that ever man was jolted in, and drove furiously along the causeways by the Brenta, into whose deep waters it is a mercy, methinks, I was not precipitated. Fiesso, the Dolo, the Mira, with all their gardens, statues, and palaces, seemed flying after each other, so rapid was our motion.

After a few hours' confinement between close steeps, the scene opened to the wide shore of Fusina. I looked up (for I had scarcely time to look before) and beheld a troubled sky, shot with vivid red, the Lagunes tinted like the opal, and the islands of a glowing flame-colour. The lofty mountains of the distant continent appeared of a deep melancholy grey, and innumerable gondolas were passing to and fro in all their blackness. The sun, after a long struggle, was swallowed up in the tempestuous clouds.

In an hour we drew near to Venice, and saw its world of domes rising out of the waters. A fresh breeze bore the toll of innumerable bells by my ear. Sadness came over me as I entered the great canal, and recognised (the scene of many a strange adventure) those solemn palaces, with their lofty arcades and gloomy arches, beneath which I had so often sat.

The Venetians being mostly at their villas on the Brenta, the town appeared deserted. I visited, however, all my old haunts in the Place of St. Mark, ran up the Campanile, and rowed backwards and forwards, opposite the Ducal Palace, by moonlight. They are building a spacious quay, near the street of the Sclavonians, fronting the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, where I remained alone at least an hour, following the wanderings of the moon amongst mountainous clouds, and listening to the waters dashing against marble steps.

I closed my evening at my friend M. de R.'s, and sung over the airs I composed in the dawn of our acquaintance.

Next morning the wind was uncommonly violent for the mild season of June, and the canals much agitated; but I was determined to visit the Lido once more, and bathe on my accustomed beach. The pines in the garden of the Carthusians were nodding as I passed by in my gondola, which was very poetically buffeted by the waves.

Traversing the desert of locusts, I hailed the Adriatic, and plunged into its bosom. The sea, delightfully cool, refreshed me to such a degree, that, upon my return to Venice, I found myself able to thread its labyrinths of streets, canals, and alleys, in search of amber and Oriental curiosities. The variety of exotic merchandize, the perfume of coffee, the shade of awnings, and the sight of Greeks and Asiatics sitting crossed-legged under them, made me think myself in the bazaars of Constantinople.

'Tis certain my beloved town of Venice ever recalls a series of Eastern ideas and adventures. I cannot help thinking St. Mark's a mosque, and the neighbouring palace some vast seraglio, full of arabesque saloons, embroidered sofas, and voluptuous Circassians.

LETTER IV.

PADUA, *June 19th.*

The morning was delightful, and St. Anthony's bells in full chime. A shower which had fallen in the night rendered the air so cool and grateful, that Mad. de R. and myself determined to seize the opportunity and go to Mirabello, a country house, which Algarotti had inhabited, situate amongst the Euganean hills, eight or nine miles from Padua.

Our road lay between poplar alleys and fields of yellow corn, overhung by garlands of vine, most beautifully green. I soon found myself in the midst of my favourite hills, upon slopes covered with clover, and shaded by cherry-trees. Bending down their boughs I gathered the fruit, and grew cooler and happier every instant.

We dined very comfortably in a strange hall, where I pitched my pianoforte, and sang the voluptuous airs of Bertoni's

Armida. That enchantress might have raised her palace in this situation; and, had I been Rinaldo, I certainly should not very soon have abandoned it.

After dinner we drank coffee under some branching lemons, which sprang from a terrace, commanding a boundless scene of towers and villas; tall cypresses and shrubby hillocks rising, like islands, out of a sea of corn and vine.

Evening drawing on, and the breeze blowing fresh from the distant Adriatic, I reclined on a slope, and turned my eyes anxiously towards Venice; then upon some little fields hemmed in by chestnuts in blossom, where the peasants were making their hay, and, from thence, to a mountain, crowned by a circular grove of fir and cypress.

In the centre of these shades some monks have a comfortable nest; perennial springs, a garden of delicious vegetables, and, I dare say, a thousand luxuries besides, which the poor mortals below never dream of.

Had it not been late, I should certainly have climbed up to the grove, and asked admittance into its recesses; but having no mind to pass the night in this eyrie, I contented myself with the distant prospect.

LETTER V.

ROME, *June 29th.*

It is needless for me to say I wish you with me: you know I do; you know how delightfully we should ramble about Rome together. This evening, instead of jiggeting along the Corso with the puppets in blue and silver coats, and green and gold coaches, instead of bowing to Cardinal this, and dotting my head to Abbé t'other, I strolled to the Coliseo, found out my old haunts amongst its arches, and enjoyed the pure transparent sky between groves of slender cypress. Then bending my course to the Palatine Mount, I passed under the Arch of Titus, and gained the Capitol, which was quite deserted, the world, thank Heaven, being all slip-slopping in coffee-houses, or staring at a few painted boards patched up before the Colonna palace, where, by the by, to-night is a grand *rinfresco* for all the dolls and doll-fanciers of Rome. I heard their buzz at a distance; that was enough for me!

Soothed by the rippling of waters, I descended the Capitoline stairs, and leaned several minutes against one of the Egyptian lionesses. This animal has no knack at oracles, or else it would have murmured out to me the situation of that secret cave, where the wolf suckled Romulus and his brother.

About nine, I returned home, and am now writing to you like a prophet on the housetop. Behind me rustle the thickets of Villa Medici; before, lies roof beyond roof and dome beyond dome: these are dimly discovered; but don't you see the great cupola of cupolas, twinkling with illuminations? The town is real, I am certain; but, surely, that structure of fire must be visionary.

LETTER VI.

ROME, *June 30th.*

As soon as the sun declined I strolled into the Villa Medici; but finding it haunted by fine pink and yellow people, nay, even by the Spanish Ambassador, and several more dignified carcasses, I moved off to the Negroni garden. There I found what my soul desired, thickets of jasmine, and wild spots overgrown with bay; long alleys of cypress totally neglected, and almost impassable through the luxuriance of the vegetation; on every side antique fragments, vases, sarcophagi, and altars sacred to the Manes, in deep, shady recesses, which I am certain the Manes must love. The air was filled with the murmurs of water, trickling down basins of porphyry, and losing itself amongst overgrown weeds and grasses.

Above the wood and between its boughs appeared several domes, and a strange lofty tower. I will not say they belong to St. Maria Maggiore; no, they are fanes and porticos dedicated to Cybele, who delights in sylvan situations. The forlorn air of this garden, with its high and reverend shades, make me imagine it as old as the baths of Dioclesian, which peep over one of its walls. Yes, I am persuaded some consul or prætor dwelt here only fifty years ago. Would to God, our souls might be transported to such solitary spots! where we might glide along the dark alleys together, when bodies were gone to bed. I discovered a little cave that would just suit us; celandine, Venus' hair, and a thousand delicate plants, growing downwards from the cave; beneath lies a clear spring.

At the close of day, I repaired to the platform before the stately porticos of the Lateran. There I sat, folded up in myself. Some priests jarred the iron gates behind me. I looked over my shoulder through the portals, into the portico. Night began to fill it with darkness. Upon turning round, the sad waste of the Campagna met my eyes, and I wished to go home, but had not the power. A pressure, like that I have felt in horrid dreams, seemed to fix me to the pavement.

I was thus in a manner forced to view the dreary scene, the long line of aqueducts and lonesome towers. Perhaps the unwholesome vapours, rising like blue mists from the plains, affected me. I know not how it was; but I never experienced such strange, such chilling terrors. About ten o'clock, thank God, the spell dissolved; I found my limbs at liberty, and returned home.

LETTER VII.

NAPLES, *July 8th.*

The sea-breezes restored me to life. I set the heat of mid-day at defiance, and do not believe in the horrors of the sirocco. Yesterday I passed at Portici, with Lady H. The morning, refreshing and pleasant, invited us at an early hour into the open air. We drove, in an uncovered chaise, to the royal Bosquetto: no other carriage than Sir W.'s is allowed to enter its alleys. We breathed a fresh air untainted by dust or garlic. Every now and then, amidst wild bushes of ilex and myrtle, one finds a graceful antique statue, sometimes a fountain, and often a rude knoll, where the rabbits sit undisturbed, contemplating the blue glittering bay; at least, I should do so, if I were a rabbit.

The walls of this shady inclosure are lined with Peruvian aloes, whose white blossoms, scented like those of the magnolia, form the most magnificent clusters. They are plants to salute respectfully as one passes by, such is their size and dignity. In the midst of the thickets stands the King's Pagliaro, surrounded by gardens with hedges of luxuriant jasmine, whose branches are suffered to flaunt as much as Nature pleases.

The morning sun darted his first rays on their flowers just as I entered this pleasant spot. The hut looks as if erected in the days of fairy pastoral life; its neatness is quite delightful. Bright tiles compose the floor; straw, nicely platted, covers the walls. In the middle of the room, you see a table spread with a beautiful Persian carpet; at one end, four niches with mattresses of silk, where the King and his favourites repose after dinner; at the other, a white marble basin. Mount a little staircase, and you find yourself in another apartment, formed by the roof, which being entirely composed of glistening straw, casts that comfortable yellow glow I admire. From the windows you look into the garden, not flourished with parterres, but divided into plats of fragrant herbs and flowers, with here and there a little marble table, or basin of the purest water.

These sequestered inclosures are cultivated with the greatest care, and so frequently watered, that I observed lettuces, and a variety of other vegetables, as fresh as in our green England.

AN EXCURSION TO THE GRAND CHARTREUSE IN THE YEAR 1778.

THE Grand Chartreuse has exceeded my expectations; it is more wonderfully wild than I can describe, or even you can imagine. It has possessed me to such a degree that at present I can neither think, speak, nor write upon any other subject.

June 5th.—I left Geneva, and after passing through a succession of valleys between innumerable mountains, and after crossing a variety of picturesque bridges, thrown over the streams which water them, arrived at Aix, in Savoy, famous for its baths, which, as disagreeable things are generally the most salutary, ought doubtless to be of the greatest efficacy; for more uninviting objects one seldom meets with.

Advancing beneath a little eminence, partly rock, partly wall, we discovered the principal bath, filled with a blue reeking water, whose very steam is sufficient to seethe one without further assistance.

Scarce had we stood looking on it a minute, before down dashed three or four dirty boys, as copper-coloured as the natives of Bengal; who by splashing us all over, and swimming about *à la crapaudine*, convinced us that it was not their fault, if we would not have companions in the delights of bathing. I soon hurried away from this salubrious cauldron, and stepping into a little chapel hard by, where they were singing vespers, prayed heartily to the Virgin, that I might never need the assistance of those wonder-working waters over which she presides. As there was but little company in the town, and little amusement, I went to bed at nine, and rose at four the next morning, that I might reach before sunset the celebrated road, which Charles Emanuel had cut through a rocky mountain.

My plan succeeded, and after dining at Chambery (a place scarce worth speaking of to you), and passing by a cataract that throws itself from a lofty steep, I began to discover a beautiful woody vale, terminated on one side by the hallowed cliffs of the Grand Chartreuse, and on the other by the mountain which Charles Emanuel had perforated in so extraordinary a manner. The sun was just sinking in a brilliant cloud, which seemed to repose on a swelling hill, covered with cattle, when we quitted the cheerful valley, and began to descend between two ridges of precipices, that at some distance had the appearance of towering ramparts. Pursuing our route, we found ourselves in a deep cleft, surrounded by caverns, echoing with a thousand rills which trickle down their sides, and mingling their murmurs with the rattling of our wheels and the steps of our horses, infinitely repeated and multiplied, formed, altogether, the strangest combination of sounds that ever reached my ears. The road itself is admirably cut, and hewn with such neatness that, were it not for the savage and desolate air of its environs, I should have imagined myself approaching some grand castle or considerable city. Toward the summits of the precipices, that in some places rise to a majestic elevation (the two sides here and there nearly meeting in an arch), hang light woods of glossy green, which, being agitated by a gentle wind, cast a moving shadow over the cleft beneath, and, at a little distance, gave our road the appearance of a chequered pavement.

Having wound through the bosom of the mountain for some time, I was struck by the unexpected appearance of a grand edifice, resembling a vast portal, supported by Doric pilasters, and crowned with an ornamented pediment. Upon my nearer approach I found a smooth tablet filling up the space I had allotted for an entrance, on which was engraven a pompous Latin inscription, setting forth with what incredible labour and perseverance his Majesty, Charles Emanuel the Second of Sardinia, Cyprus, and Jerusalem, King, had cut this road through the mountain; which great enterprise, though unattempted by the Romans, and despaired of by other nations, was executed under his auspices. I very sincerely wished him joy, and, as the evening was growing rather cool, was not sorry to perceive, through an opening in the rocks, a wide-extended plain, interspersed with meadows, embosomed by woods, in which I distinguished Les Echelles, a village, where we were

to lie, with its chimneys smoking, under the base of one of the Carthusian mountains, round which had gathered a concourse of red and greyish clouds.

The twilight was beginning to prevail when we reached our inn, and very glad I was to leave it at the first dawn of the next day. We were now obliged to abandon our coach; and taking horse, proceeded towards the mountains, which, with the valleys between them, form what is called the Desert of the Carthusians.

In an hour's time we were drawing near, and could discern the opening of a narrow valley overhung by shaggy precipices, above which rose lofty peaks, covered to their very summits with wood. We could now distinguish the roar of torrents, and a confusion of strange sounds, issuing from dark forests of pine. I confess at this moment I was somewhat startled. I experienced some disagreeable sensations, and it was not without a degree of unwillingness that I left the gay pastures and enlivening sunshine, to throw myself into this gloomy and disturbed region. How dreadful, thought I, must be the despair of those who enter it never to return!

But after the first impression was worn away, all my curiosity redoubled; and desiring our guide to put forward with greater speed, we made such good haste, that the meadows and cottages of the plain were soon left far behind, and we found ourselves on the banks of the torrent, whose agitation answered the ideas which its sounds had inspired. Into the midst of these troubled waters we were obliged to plunge with our horses, and, when landed on the opposite shore, were by no means displeased to have passed them.

We had now closed with the forests, over which the impending rocks diffused an additional gloom. The day grew obscured by clouds, and the sun no longer enlightened the distant plains, when we began to ascend towards the entrance of the desert, marked by two pinnacles of rock far above us, beyond which a melancholy twilight prevailed. Every moment we approached nearer and nearer to the sounds which had alarmed us; and, suddenly emerging from the woods, we discovered several mills and forges, with many complicated machines of iron, hanging over the torrent, that threw itself headlong from a cleft in the precipices; on one side of which I perceived our road winding along, till it was stopped by a

venerable gateway. A rock above one of the forges was hollowed into the shape of a round tower, of no great size, but resembling very much an altar in figure; and, what added greatly to the grandeur of the object, was a livid flame continually palpitating upon it, which the gloom of the valley rendered perfectly discernible.

The road, at a small distance from this remarkable scene, was become so narrow, that, had my horse started, I should have been but too well acquainted with the torrent that raged beneath; dismounting, therefore, I walked towards the edge of the great fall, and there, leaning on a fragment of cliff, looked down into the foaming gulph, where the waters were hurled along over broken pines, pointed rocks, and stakes of iron. Then, lifting up my eyes, I took in the vast extent of the forests, frowning on the brows of the mountains.

It was here first I felt myself seized by the genius of the place, and penetrated with veneration of its religious gloom; and, I believe, uttered many extravagant exclamations; but, such was the dashing of the wheels, and the rushing of the waters at the bottom of the forges, that what I said was luckily undistinguishable.

I was not yet, however, within the consecrated inclosure, and therefore not perfectly contented; so, leaving my fragment, I paced in silence up the path which led to the great portal. When we arrived before it, I rested a moment, and leaning against the stout oaken gate, which closed up the entrance to this unknown region, felt at my heart a certain awe, that brought to my mind the sacred terror of those, in ancient days, going to be admitted into the Eleusinian mysteries.

My guide gave two knocks; after a solemn pause, the gate was slowly opened, and all our horses having passed through it, was again carefully closed.

I now found myself in a narrow dell, surrounded on every side by peaks of the mountains, rising almost beyond my sight, and shelving downwards till their bases were hidden by the foam and spray of the water, over which hung a thousand withered and distorted trees. The rocks seemed crowding upon me, and, by their particular situation, threatened to obstruct every ray of light; but, notwithstanding the menacing appearance of the prospect, I still kept following my guide, up a craggy ascent, partly hewn through a rock,

and bordered by the trunks of ancient fir-trees, which formed a fantastic barrier, till we came to a dreary and exposed promontory, impending directly over the dell.

The woods are here clouded with darkness, and the torrents, rushing with additional violence, are lost in the gloom of the caverns below; every object, as I looked downwards from my path, that hung midway between the base and the summit of the cliff, was horrid and woeful. The channel of the torrent sunk deep amidst frightful crags, and the pale willows and wreathed roots spreading over it, answered my ideas of those dismal abodes, where, according to the druidical mythology, the ghosts of conquered warriors were bound. I shivered whilst I was regarding these regions of desolation, and, quickly lifting up my eyes to vary the scene, I perceived a range of whitish cliffs, glistening with the light of the sun, to emerge from these melancholy forests.

On a fragment that projected over the chasm, and concealed for a moment its terrors, I saw a cross, on which was written VIA COELI. The cliffs being the heaven to which I now aspired, we deserted the edge of the precipice, and ascending, came to a retired nook of the rocks, in which several copious rills had worn irregular grottoes. Here we reposed an instant, and were enlivened with a few sunbeams, piercing the thickets and gilding the waters that bubbled from the rock, over which hung another cross, inscribed with this short sentence, which the situation rendered wonderfully pathetic, O SPES UNICA! the fervent exclamation of some wretch disgusted with the world, whose only consolation was found in this retirement.

We quitted this solitary cross to enter a thick forest of beech-trees, that screened in some measure the precipices on which they grew, catching, however, every instant terrifying glimpses of the torrent below. Streams gushed from every crevice in the cliffs, and falling over the mossy roots and branches of the beech, hastened to join the great torrent, athwart which I every now and then remarked certain tottering bridges, and sometimes could distinguish a Carthusian crossing over to his hermitage, that just peeped above the woody labyrinths on the opposite shore.

Whilst I was proceeding amongst the innumerable trunks of the beech trees, my guide pointed out to me a peak, rising above the others, which he called the Throne of Moses. If

that prophet had received his revelations in this desert, no voice need have declared it holy ground, for every part of it is stamped with such a sublimity of character as would alone be sufficient to impress the idea.

Having left these woods behind, and crossing a bridge of many lofty arches, I shuddered once more at the impetuosity of the torrent; and, mounting still higher, came at length to a kind of platform before two cliffs, joined by an arch of rock, under which we were to pursue our road. Below we beheld again innumerable streams, turbulently precipitating themselves from the woods, and lashing the base of the mountains, mossed over with a dark sea-green.

In this deep hollow such mists and vapours prevailed as hindered my prying into its recesses; besides, such was the dampness of the air, that I hastened gladly from its neighbourhood, and passing under the second portal, beheld with pleasure the sunbeams gilding the Throne of Moses.

It was now about ten o'clock, and my guide assured me I should soon discover the convent. Upon this information I took new courage, and continued my route on the edge of the rocks, till we struck into another gloomy grove. After turning about it for some time, we entered again into the glare of daylight, and saw a green valley skirted by ridges of cliffs and sweeps of wood before us. Towards the farther end of this inclosure, on a gentle acclivity, rose the revered turrets of the Carthusians, which extend in a long line on the brow of the hill; beyond them a woody amphitheatre majestically presents itself, terminated by spires of rock and promontories lost amongst the clouds.

The roar of the torrent was now but faintly distinguishable, and all the scenes of horror and confusion I had passed, were succeeded by a sacred and profound calm. I traversed the valley with a thousand sensations I despair of describing, and stood before the gate of the convent with as much awe as some novice or candidate, newly arrived, to solicit the holy retirement of the order.

As admittance is more readily granted to the English than to almost any other nation, it was not long before the gates opened, and whilst the porter ordered our horses to the stable, we entered a court watered by two fountains and built round with lofty edifices, characterized by a noble simplicity.

The interior portal, opening, discovered an arched aisle, extending till the perspective nearly met, along which windows, but scantily distributed between the pilasters, admitted a pale solemn light, just sufficient to distinguish the objects with a picturesque uncertainty. We had scarcely set our feet on the pavement when the monks began to issue from an arch, about half way down, and passing in a long succession from their chapel, bowed reverently with much humility and meekness, and dispersed in silence, leaving one of their body alone in the aisle.

The Father Coadjutor (for he only remained) advanced towards us with great courtesy, and welcomed us in a manner which gave me far more pleasure than all the frivolous salutations and affected greetings so common in the world beneath. After asking us a few indifferent questions, he called one of the lay brothers, who live in the convent under less severe restrictions than the fathers whom they serve, and ordering him to prepare our apartment, conducted us to a large square hall with casement windows, and, what was more comfortable, an enormous chimney, whose hospitable hearth blazed with a fire of dry aromatic fir, on each side of which were two doors that communicated with the neat little cells destined for our bedchambers.

Whilst he was placing us round the fire, a ceremony by no means unimportant in the cold climate of these upper regions, a bell rang which summoned him to prayers. After charging the lay brother to set before us the best fare their desert afforded, he retired, and left us at full liberty to examine our chambers.

The weather lowered, and the casements permitted very little light to enter the apartment: but on the other side it was amply enlivened by the gleams of the fire, that spread all over a certain comfortable air, which even sunshine but rarely diffuses. Whilst the showers descended with great violence, the lay brother and another of his companions were placing an oval table, very neatly carved and covered with the finest linen, in the middle of the hall; and, before we had examined a number of portraits which were hung in all the panels of the wainscot, they called us to a dinner widely different from what might have been expected in so dreary a situation. The best fish, the most exquisite fruits, and a variety of dishes, excellent

without the assistance of meat, were served up with an order and arrangement that showed it was not the first time they had entertained in the noblest manner. But I was not more struck with the delicacy of the entertainment, than with the extreme cleanness and English-like neatness of the whole apartment and its furniture. A marble fountain, particularly, gave it a very agreeable aid, and the water that fell from it into a porphyry shell was remarkable for its clearness and purity. Our attendant friar was helping us to some Burgundy, which we pronounced of very respectable antiquity, when the Coadjutor returned, accompanied by two other fathers, the Secretary and Procurator, whom he presented to us. You would have been both charmed and surprised with the cheerful resignation that appeared in their countenances, and with the easy turn of their conversation.

The Coadjutor, though equally kind, was as yet more reserved: his countenance, however, spoke for him without the aid of words, and there was in his manner a mixture of dignity and humility, which could not fail to interest. There were moments when the recollection of some past event seemed to shade his countenance with a melancholy that rendered it still more affecting. I should suspect he formerly possessed a great share of natural vivacity (something of it being still, indeed, apparent in his more unguarded moments); but this spirit is almost entirely subdued by the penitence and mortification of the order.

The secretary displayed a very considerable share of knowledge in the political state of Europe, furnished probably by the extensive correspondence these fathers preserve with the three hundred and sixty subordinate convents, dispersed throughout all those countries where the court of Rome still maintains its influence.

In the course of our conversation they asked me innumerable questions about England, where formerly, they said, many monasteries had belonged to their order; and principally that of W., which they had learnt to be now in my possession.

The Secretary, almost with tears in his eyes, beseeched me to revere these consecrated edifices, and to preserve their remains, for the sake of St. Hugo, their canonized Prior. I replied greatly to his satisfaction, and then declaimed so much in favour of Saint Bruno, and the holy prior of Witham, that the

good fathers grew exceedingly delighted with the conversation, and made me promise to remain some days with them. I readily complied with their request, and, continuing in the same strain, that had so agreeably affected their ears, was soon presented with the works of Saint Bruno, whom I so zealously admired.

After we had sat extolling them, and talking upon much the same sort of subjects for about an hour, the Coadjutor proposed a walk amongst the cloisters and galleries, as the weather would not admit of any longer excursion. He leading the way, we ascended a flight of steps, which brought us to a gallery, on each side of which a vast number of pictures, representing the dependent convents, were ranged; for I was now in the capital of the order, where the General resides, and from whence he issues forth his commands to his numerous subjects; who depute the superiors of their respective convents, whether situated in the wilds of Calabria, the forests of Poland, or in the remotest districts of Portugal and Spain, to assist at the grand chapter, held annually under him, a week or two after Easter.

This reverend father Dom Biclét died about ten days before our arrival: a week ago they elected the Pere Robinét prior of the Carthusian convent at Paris in his room, and two fathers were now on their route to apprise him of their choice, and to salute him General of the Carthusians. During this interregnum the Coadjutor holds the first rank in the temporal, and the Grand Vicaire in the spiritual, affairs of the order; both of which are very extensive.

If I may judge from the representations of the different convents, which adorn this gallery, there are many highly worthy of notice, for the singularity of their situations, and the wild beauties of the landscapes which surround them. The Venetian Chartreuse, placed in a woody island, and that of Rome, rising from amongst groups of majestic ruins, struck me as peculiarly pleasing. Views of the English monasteries hung formerly in such a gallery, but had been destroyed by fire, together with the old convent. The list only remains, with but a very few written particulars concerning them.

Having amused myself for some time with the pictures, and the descriptions the Coadjutor gave me of them, we

quitted the gallery and entered a kind of chapel, in which were two altars with lamps burning before them, on each side of a lofty portal. This opened into a grand coved hall, adorned with historical paintings of St. Bruno's life, and the portraits of the Generals of the order, since the year of the great founder's death (1085) to the present time. Under these portraits are the stalls for the Superiors, who assist at the grand convocation. In front appears the General's throne; above, hangs a representation of the canonized Bruno, crowned with stars.

Were I, after walking along the dim cloisters, and passing through the antechapel, faintly illuminated by a solitary lamp, suddenly to enter this hall at midnight, when the convocation is assembled, and the synod of venerable fathers, all in solemn order, surrounding the successor of Bruno, it would be a long while, I believe, before I could recover from the surprise of so august a spectacle. It must indeed be a very imposing sight: the gravity they preserve on these occasions, their venerable age (for Superiors cannot be chosen young), and the figures of their deceased Generals, dimly discovered above, may surely be allowed to awe even an heretical spectator into a momentary respect for the order. For my own part, I must confess, that the hall, though divested of all this accompaniment, filled me with a veneration I scarcely knew how to account for; perhaps the portraits inspired it. They were all well executed, and mostly in attitudes of adoration. The form of Bruno was almost lost in the splendour of the stars which hovered over him. I could in some moments fancy myself capable of plunging into the horror of a desert, and foregoing all the vanities and delights of the world, to secure my memory so sublime a consecration.

The Coadjutor seemed charmed with the respect with which I looked round on these holy objects; and if the hour of vespers had not been drawing near, we should have spent more time in the contemplation of Bruno's miracles, portrayed on the lower panels of the hall. We left that room to enter a winding passage (lighted by windows in the roof), that brought us to a cloister six hundred feet in length, from which branched off two others, joining a fourth of the same most extraordinary dimensions. Vast ranges of slender pillars extend round the different courts of the edifice, many of which are thrown into gardens belonging to particular cells.

We entered one of them: its inhabitant received us with much civility, walked before us through a little corridor that looked on his garden, showed us his narrow dwelling, and, having obtained leave of the Coadjutor to speak, gave us his benediction, and beheld us depart with concern. Nature has given this poor monk very considerable talents for painting. He has drawn the portrait of the late General, in a manner that discovers great facility of execution; but he is not allowed to exercise his pencil on any other subject, lest he should be amused; and amusement in this severe order is a crime. He had so subdued, so mortified an appearance, that I was not sorry to hear the bell, which summoned the Coadjutor to prayers, and prevented my entering any more of the cells. We continued straying from cloister to cloister, and wandering along the winding passages and intricate galleries of this immense edifice, whilst the Coadjutor was assisting at vespers.

In every part of the structure reigned the most death-like calm: no sound reached my ears but the "minute drops from off the eaves." I sat down in a niche of the cloister, and fell into a profound reverie, from which I was recalled by the return of our conductor; who, I believe, was almost tempted to imagine, from the cast of my countenance, that I was deliberating whether I should not remain with them for ever.

But I soon roused myself, and testified some impatience to see the great chapel, at which we at length arrived, after traversing another labyrinth of cloisters. The gallery immediately before its entrance appeared quite gay, in comparison with the others I had passed, and owes its cheerfulness to a large window (ornamented with slabs of polished marble), that admits the view of a lovely wood. Being neatly glazed, and free from paintings or Gothic ornaments, it allows a full blaze of light to dart on the chapel door; which is also adorned with marble, in a plain but noble style of architecture.

The father sacristan stood ready on the steps of the portal to grant us admittance; and, throwing open the valves, we entered the chapel and were struck by the justness of its proportions, the simple majesty of the arched roof, and the mild solemn light, equally diffused over every part of the edifice. No tawdry ornaments, no glaring pictures, disgraced

the sanctity of the place. The high altar, standing distinct from the walls, which were hung with a rich velvet, was the only object on which many ornaments were lavished, and even there the elegance of the workmanship concealed the glare of the materials, which were silver, solid gold, and the most costly gems. It being Whit-Sunday, this altar was covered with statues of gold, shrines, and candelabra of the stateliest shape and most delicate execution. Four of the latter, of a gigantic size, were placed on the steps; which, together with part of the inlaid floor within the choir, were spread with beautiful carpets.

The illumination of so many tapers striking on the shrines, censers, and pillars of polished jasper, sustaining the canopy of the altar, produced a wonderful effect; and, as the rest of the chapel was visible only by the faint external light admitted from above, the splendour and dignity of the altar was enhanced by contrast. I retired a moment from it, and seating myself in one of the furthermost stalls of the choir, looked towards it, and fancied it had risen like an exhalation.

Here I remained several minutes breathing nothing but incense, and should not have quitted my station soon, had I not been apprehensive of disturbing the devotions of two aged fathers who had just entered, and were prostrating themselves before the steps of the altar. These venerable figures added greatly to the solemnity of the scene; which as the day declined increased every moment in splendour; for the sparkling of several lamps of chased silver that hung from the roofs, and the gleaming of nine huge tapers which I had not before noticed, began to be visible just as I left the chapel.

Passing through the sacristy, where lay several piles of rich embroidered vestments, purposely displayed for our inspection, we regained the cloister which led to our apartment, where the supper was ready prepared. We had scarcely finished it, when the Coadjutor, and the fathers who had accompanied us before, returned, and ranging themselves round the fire, resumed the conversation about St. Bruno.

Finding me very piously disposed by the wonders I had seen in the day to listen to things of a miraculous nature, they began to relate the inspirations they had received from him, and his mysterious apparitions. I was all attention, respect, and credulity. The old Secretary worked himself up to such a pitch of

enthusiasm, that I am very much inclined to imagine he believed, in these moments, all the marvellous events he related. The Coadjutor being less violent in his pretensions to St. Bruno's modern miracles, contented himself with enumerating the noble works he had done in the days of his fathers, and in the old time before them.

It grew rather late before my kind hosts had finished their narrations, and I was not sorry, after all the exercise I had taken, to return to my cell, where everything invited to repose. I was charmed with the neatness and oddity of my little apartment; its cabin-like bed, oratory, and ebony crucifix; in short, everything it contained; not forgetting the aromatic odour of the pine, with which it was roofed, floored, and wainscoted. The night was luckily dark. Had the moon appeared, I could not have prevailed upon myself to have quitted her till very late; but, as it happened, I crept into my cabin, and was by "whispering winds soon lulled asleep."

Eight o'clock struck next morning before I awoke; when, to my great sorrow, I found the peaks, which rose above the convent, veiled in vapours, and the rain descending with violence.

After we had breakfasted by the light of our fire (for the casements admitted but a very feeble gleam), I sat down to the works of St. Bruno; of all medleys the strangest. Allegories without end: a theologico-natural history of birds, beasts, and fishes: several chapters on paradise; the delights of solitude; the glory of Solomon's temple; the new Jerusalem; and numberless other wonderful subjects, full of enthusiasm and superstition.

Saint Bruno was certainly a mighty genius; I admire the motives which drew him to this desert; but perhaps before we come to that part of the story, you will like to know what preceded it. My Saint (for Bruno has succeeded Thomas of Canterbury) was of noble descent, and possessed considerable wealth. He was not less remarkable for the qualities of his mind, and his talents gained him the degree of Master of the great sciences in the University of Rheims; here he contracted a friendship with Odo, afterwards Urban the Second. Being always poetic, singular, and visionary, he soon grew disgusted with the world, and began early in life to sigh after retirement. His residence at Grenoble, where he was

invited by Hugo, its bishop, determined him to the monastic state.

This venerable prelate imparted to him a vision in which he seemed to behold the desert and mountain beyond his city visible in the dead of night by the streaming of seven lucid stars that hung directly over them. Whilst he was ardently gazing at this wonder, a still voice was heard declaring it the future abode of Bruno—by him to be consecrated as a retirement for holy men desirous of holding converse with their God. No shepherd's pipe was to be heard within these precincts; no huntsman's profane feet to tread these silent regions, which were to be dedicated solely to their Creator; no woman was to ascend this mountain, nor violate by her allurements the sacred repose of its inhabitants.

Such were the first institutions of the order as the inspired Bishop of Grenoble delivered them to Bruno, who selecting a few persons that, like himself, contemned the splendours of the world and the charms of society, repaired with them to this spot; and, in the darkest parts of the forests which shade the most gloomy recesses of the mountains, founded the first convent of Carthusians, long since destroyed.

Several years passed away, whilst Bruno was employed in actions of the most exalted piety; and, the fame of his exemplary conduct reaching Rome (where his friend had been lately invested with the papal tiara), the whole conclave was desirous of seeing him, and entreated Urban to invite him to Rome. The request of Christ's vicegerent was not to be refused; and Bruno quitted his beloved solitude, leaving some of his disciples behind, who propagated his doctrines, and tended zealously the infant order.

The pomp of the Roman court soon disgusted the rigid Bruno, who had weaned himself entirely from worldly affections.

Being wholly intent on futurity, the bustle and tumults of a busy metropolis became so irksome that he supplicated Urban for leave to retire; and, having obtained it, left Rome, and immediately seeking the wilds of Calabria, there sequestered himself in a lonely hermitage, calmly expecting his last moments. Many are the miracles which he wrought and which his canonized bones have since effected: angels (it is said), hovered round him in his departing hour, and bore him

on their wings to heaven. The different accounts of his translation are almost endless; and as they are all nearly in the same style, it will be needless to recite them.

I had scarcely finished taking extracts from the life and writings of St. Bruno when the dinner appeared, consisting of everything most delicate which a strict adherence to the rules of meagre could allow. The good fathers returned as usual with the dessert, and served up an admirable dish of miracles, well seasoned with the devil and prettily garnished with angels and moonbeams.*

Our conversation was interrupted, very agreeably, by the sudden intrusion of the sun, which, escaping from the clouds, shone in full splendour above the highest peak of the mountains, and the vapours fleeting by degrees discovered the woods in all the freshness of their verdure. The pleasure I received from seeing this new creation rising to view was very lively, and, as the fathers assured me the humidity of their walks did not often continue longer than the showers, I left my hall.

Crossing the court, I hastened out of the gates, and running swiftly along a winding path on the side of the meadow, bordered by the forests, enjoyed the charms of the prospect, inhaled the perfume of the woodlands, and now turning towards the summits of the precipices that encircled this sacred inclosure, admired the glowing colours they borrowed from the sun, contrasted by the dark hues of the forest. Now, casting my eyes below, I suffered them to roam from valley to valley, and from one stream (beset with tall pines and tufted beech trees) to another. The purity of the air in these exalted regions, and the lightness of my own spirits, almost seized me with the idea of treading in that element.

Not content with the distant beauties of the hanging rocks and falling waters, I still kept running wildly along, with an eagerness and rapidity that, to a sober spectator, would have given me the appearance of one possessed, and with reason, for I was affected with the scene to a degree I despair of expressing.

Whilst I was continuing my course, pursued by a thousand strange ideas, a father, who was returning from some distant

* Angels are frequently represented, in legendary tales, as riding on the beams of the moon.

hermitage, stopped my career, and made signs for me to repose myself on a bench erected under a neighbouring shed; and, perceiving my agitation and disordered looks, fancied, I believe, that one of the bears that lurk near the snows of the mountains had alarmed me by his sudden appearance.

The good old man, expressing by his gestures that he wished me to recover myself in quiet on the bench, hastened, with as much alacrity as his age permitted, to a cottage adjoining the shed, and returning in a few moments, presented me some water in a wooden bowl, into which he let fall several drops of an elixir composed of innumerable herbs, and having performed this deed of charity, signified to me by a look, in which benevolence, compassion, and perhaps some little remains of curiosity were strongly painted, how sorry he was to be restrained by his vow of silence from inquiring into the cause of my agitation, and giving me farther assistance. I answered also by signs, on purpose to carry on the adventure, and suffered him to depart with all his conjectures unsatisfied.

No sooner had I lost sight of the benevolent hermit, than I started up, and pursued my path with my former agility, till I came to the edge of a woody dell, that divided the meadow on which I was running from the opposite promontory. Here I paused, and looking up at the cliffs, now but faintly illumined by the sun, which had been some time sinking on our narrow horizon, reflected that it would be madness to bewilder myself, at so late an hour, in the mazes of the forest. Being thus determined, I abandoned with regret the idea of penetrating into the lovely region before me, and contented myself for some moments with marking the pale tints of the evening gradually overspreading the cliffs, so lately flushed with the gleams of the setting sun.

But my eyes were soon diverted from contemplating these objects by a red light streaming over the northern sky, which attracted my notice, as I sat on the brow of a sloping hill, looking down a steep hollow vale, surrounded by the forests, above which rose majestically the varied peaks and promontories of the mountains.

The upland lawns, which hang at immense heights above the vale, next caught my attention. I was gazing alternately

at them and the valley, when a long succession of light misty clouds, of strange fantastic shapes, issuing from a narrow gully between the rocks, passed on, like a solemn procession, over the hollow dale, midway between the stream that watered it below and the summits of the cliffs on high.

The tranquillity of the region, the verdure of the lawn, environed by girdles of flourishing wood, and the lowing of the distant herds, filled me with the most pleasing sensations. But when I lifted up my eyes to the towering cliffs, and beheld the northern sky streaming with ruddy light, and the long succession of misty forms hovering over the space beneath, they became sublime and awful. The dews which began to descend, and the vapours which were rising from every dell, reminded me of the lateness of the hour; and it was with great reluctance that I turned from the scene which had so long engaged my contemplation, and traversed slowly and silently the solitary meadows, over which I had hurried with such eagerness an hour ago.

Hill appeared after hill, and hillock succeeded hillock, which I had passed unnoticed before. Sometimes I imagined myself following a different path from that which had brought me to the edge of the deep valley; another moment, descending into the hollows between the hillocks that concealed the distant prospects from my sight, I fancied I had entirely mistaken my route, and expected every moment to be lost amongst the rude brakes and tangled thickets that skirted the eminences around.

As the darkness increased, my situation became still more and more forlorn. I had almost abandoned the idea of reaching the convent; and whenever I gained any swelling ground, looked above, below, and on every side of me, in hopes of discovering some glimmering lamp which might indicate a hermitage, whose charitable possessor, I flattered myself, would direct me to the monastery.

At length, after a tedious wandering along the hills, I found myself, unexpectedly, under the convent walls; and, as I was looking for the gate, the attendant lay brothers came out with lights, in order to search for me. Scarcely had I joined them when the Coadjutor and the Secretary came forward, with the kindest anxiety expressed their uneasiness at my long absence, and conducted me to my apartment, where Mr. —— was

waiting, with no small degree of impatience; but I found not a word had been mentioned of my adventure with the hermit; so that, I believe, he strictly kept his vow till the day when the Carthusians are allowed to speak, and which happened after my departure.

We had hardly supped before the gates of the convent were shut, a circumstance which disconcerted me not a little, as the full moon gleamed through the casements, and the stars, sparkling above the forests of pines, invited me to leave my apartment again, and to give myself up entirely to the spectacle they offered.

The Coadjutor, perceiving that I was often looking earnestly through the windows, guessed my wishes, and calling a lay brother, ordered him to open the gates, and wait at them till my return. It was not long before I took advantage of this permission, and escaping from the courts and cloisters of the monastery, all hushed in death-like stillness, ascended a green knoll, which several ancient pines strongly marked with their shadows: there, leaning against one of their trunks, I lifted up my eyes to the awful barrier of surrounding mountains, discovered by the trembling silver light of the moon shooting directly on the woods which fringed their acclivities.

The lawns, the vast woods, the steep descents, the precipices, the torrents, lay all extended beneath, softened by a pale bluish haze, that alleviated, in some measure, the stern prospect of the rocky promontories above, wrapped in dark shadows. The sky was of the deepest azure; innumerable stars were distinguished with unusual clearness from this elevation, many of which twinkled behind the fir-trees edging the promontories. White, grey, and darkish clouds came marching towards the moon, that shone full against a range of cliffs, which lift themselves far above the others. The hoarse murmur of the torrent, throwing itself from the distant wildernesses into the gloomy vales, was mingled with the blast that blew from the mountains. It increased. The forests began to wave, black clouds rose from the north, and, as they fleeted along, approached the moon, whose light they shortly extinguished. A moment of darkness succeeded; the gust was chill and melancholy; it swept along the desert, and then subsiding, the vapours began to pass away, and the moon returned; the grandeur of the scene was renewed, and

its imposing solemnity was increased by her presence. Inspiration was in every wind.

I followed some impulse which drove me to the summit of the mountains before me; and there, casting a look on the whole extent of wild woods and romantic precipices, thought of the days of St. Bruno. I eagerly contemplated every rock that formerly might have met his eyes; drank of the spring which tradition says he was wont to drink of; and ran to every pine whose withered appearance bespoke a remote antiquity, and beneath which, perhaps, the saint had reposed himself, when worn with vigils, or possessed with the sacred spirit of his institutions.

It was midnight: the convent bell tolled; for the most solemn hour of prayer was arrived. I cannot, nor would I, attempt to unfold to you, in prose, half the strange things of which I thought, and which I seemed to see, during this wild excursion. However, I owe to it the poetical humour in which I composed the following lines, written immediately on my return, in the album of the fathers, during the stillest watch of the night:

ODE.

To orisons, the midnight bell
Had toll'd each silent inmate from his cell;
The hour was come to muse or pray,
Or work mysterious rites that shun the day:
My steps some whisp'ring influence led,
Up to yon pine-clad mountain's gloomy head:
Hollow and deep the gust did blow,
And torrents dash'd into the vales below.
At length the toilsome height attain'd,
Quick fled the moon, and sudden stillness reign'd.
As fearful turn'd my searching eye,
Glanc'd near a shadowy form, and fleeted by;
Anon, before me full it stood:
A saintly figure, pale, in pensive mood.
Damp horror thrill'd me till he spoke,
And accents faint the charm-bound silence broke:
"Long, trav'ller! ere this region near,
Say, did not whisp'rings strange arrest thine ear?
My summons 'twas to bid thee come,
Where sole the friend of Nature loves to roam.
Ages long past, this drear abode
To solitude I sanctified, and God:

'Twas here, by love of Wisdom brought,
Her truest lore, Self-knowledge, first I sought;
Devoted here my worldly wealth,
To win my chosen sons immortal health.
Midst these dun woods, and mountains steep,
Midst the wild horrors of yon desert deep,
Midst yawning caverns, wat'ry dells,
Midst long, sequestered aisles, and peaceful cells,
No passions fell distract the mind,
To Nature, Silence, and Herself consign'd.
In these still mansions who shall bide,
'Tis mine, with Heaven's appointment, to decide;
But, hither, I invite not all:
Some want the will to come, and more the call;
But all, mark well my parting voice!
Led, or by chance, necessity, or choice
(Ah! with our Genius dread to sport),
Sage lessons here may learn of high import.
Know! Silence is the nurse of Truth;
Know! Temperance long retards the flight of Youth
Learn here, how penitence and pray'r
Man's fallen race for happier worlds prepare;
Learn mild demeanour, void of art,
And bear, amidst the world, the hermit's heart;
Fix, trav'ller! deep this heaven-taught lore:
Know Bruno brings it, and returns no more."
(Half sighed, half smiled his long farewell),
He turn'd, and vanish'd in the bright'ning dell.

My imagination was too much disturbed, and my spirits far too active, to allow me any rest for some time, and I had not long been quieted by sleep, when I was suddenly awakened by a furious blast, that drove open my casement, and let in the roar of the tempest, for the night was troubled. In the intervals of the storm, in those moments when the winds seemed to pause, the faint sounds of the choir stole upon my ear; but were swallowed up the next instant by the redoubled fury of the gust, which was still increased by the roar of the waters.

I started from my bed, closed the casement, and composed myself as well as I was able; but no sooner had the sunbeams entered my window, than I arose, and gladly leaving my cell, hastened to the same knoll where I had stood the night before. The storm was dissipated, and the pure morning air delightfully refreshing; every tree, every shrub, glistened with dew. A gentle wind breathed upon the woods,

and waved the fir-trees on the cliffs, which, free from clouds, rose distinctly into the clear blue sky. I strayed from the knoll into the valley between the steeps of wood and the turrets of the convent, and passed the different buildings, destined for the manufacture of the articles necessary to the fathers; for nothing is worn or used within this inclosure which comes from the profane world.

Traversing the meadows and a succession of little dells, where I was so lately bewildered, I came to a bridge thrown over the torrent, which I crossed; and here followed a slight path that brought me to an eminence, covered with a hanging wood of beach-trees feathered to the ground, from whence I looked down the narrow pass towards Grenoble. Perceiving a smoke to arise from the groves which nodded over the eminence, I climbed up a rocky steep, and, after struggling through a thicket of shrubs, entered a smooth, sloping lawn, framed in by woody precipices; at one extremity of which I discovered the cottage, whose smoke had directed me to this sequestered spot; and, at the other, a numerous group of cattle, lying under the shade of some beech-trees, whilst several friars, with long beards and russet garments, were employed in milking them.

The luxuriant foliage of the woods, clinging round the steeps that skirted the lawn; its gay, sunny exposition; the groups of sleek, dappled cows, and the odd employment of the friars, so little consonant with their venerable beards, formed a picturesque and certainly very singular spectacle. I, who had been accustomed to behold "milk-maids singing blithe," and tripping lightly along with their pails, was not a little surprised at the silent gravity with which these figures shifted their trivets from cow to cow; and it was curious to see with what adroitness they performed their functions, managing their long beards with a facility and cleanliness equally admirable.

I watched all their movements for some time, concealed by the trees, before I made myself visible; but no sooner did I appear on the lawn, than one of the friars quitted his trivet, very methodically set down his pail, and coming towards me with an open, smiling countenance, desired me to refresh myself with some bread and milk. A second, observing what was going forward, was resolved not to be exceeded in an hospitable act, and, quitting his pail too, hastened into the woods whence

he returned in a few minutes with some strawberries, very neatly enveloped in fresh leaves. These hospitable, milking fathers, next invited me to the cottage, whither I declined going, as I preferred the shade of the beeches; so, throwing myself on the dry aromatic herbage, I enjoyed the pastoral character of the scene with all possible glee.

Not a cloud darkened the heavens; every object smiled; innumerable gaudy flies glanced in the sunbeams that played in a clear spring by the cottage; I saw with pleasure the sultry glow of the distant cliffs and forests, whilst indolently reclined in the shade, listening to the summer hum; one hour passed after another neglected away, during my repose in this most delightful of valleys. The cattle were all slunk into the recesses of the wood, and were drinking at the streams which flow along their shades, before I could prevail on myself to quit the turf and the beech trees. Never shall I cease regretting the peaceful moments I spent in Valombré, as never perhaps, were I even to return to it, may so many circumstances unite to render it pleasing.

When I returned unwillingly to the convent, the only topic on which I could converse was the charms of Valombré; but notwithstanding the indifference with which I now regarded the prospects that surrounded the monastery, I could not disdain an offer made by one of the friars, of conducting me to the summit of the highest peak in the desert.

Pretty late in the afternoon I set out with my guide, and, following his steps through many forests of pine, and wild apertures among them, strewed with fragments, arrived at a chapel, built on a mossy rock, and dedicated to St. Bruno.

Having once more drunk of the spring that issues from the rock on which this edifice is raised, I moved forward, keeping my eyes fixed on a lofty green mountain, whence rises a vast cliff, spiring up to a surprising elevation; and which (owing to the sun's reflection on a transparent mist hovering around it) was tinged with a pale visionary light. This object was the goal to which I aspired; and redoubling my activity, I made the best of my way over rude ledges of rocks, and crumbled fragments of the mountain interspersed with firs, till I came to the green steeps I had surveyed at a distance.

These I ascended with some difficulty, and, leaving a few scattered beech-trees behind, in full leaf, shortly bid adieu to

summer, and entered the regions of spring; for, as I approached that part of the mountain next the summit, the trees, which I found there rooted in the crevices, were but just beginning to unfold their leaves, and every spot of the greensward was covered with cowslips and violets.

After taking a few moments' repose, my guide prepared to clamber amongst the rocks, and I followed him with as much alertness as I was able, till laying hold of the trunk of a withered pine, we sprang upon a small level space, where I seated myself, and beheld far beneath me the vast desert and dreary solitudes, amongst which appeared, thinly scattered, the green meadows and hanging lawns. The eye next overlooking the barrier of mountains, ranged through immense tracts of distant countries; the plains where Lyons is situated; the woodlands and lakes of Savoy; amongst which that of Bourget was near enough to discover its beauties, all glowing with the warm haze of the setting sun.

My situation was too dizzy to allow a long survey; so turning my eyes from the terrific precipice, I gladly beheld an opening in the rocks, through which we passed into a little irregular glen of the smoothest greensward, closed in on one side by the great peak, and on the others by a ridge of sharp pinnacles, which crown the range of white cliffs I had so much admired the night before, when brightened by the moon.

The singular situation of this romantic spot invited me to remain in it till the sun was about to sink on the horizon: during which time I visited every little cave delved in the ridges of rock, and gathered large sprigs of the mezereon and rhododendron in full bloom, which, with a surprising variety of other plants, carpeted this lovely glen. A luxuriant vegetation,

> "That on the green turf suck'd the honey'd showers,
> And purpled all the ground with vernal flow'rs."

My guide, perceiving I was ready to mount still higher, told me it would be in vain, as the beds of snow that lie eternally in some fissures of the mountain, must necessarily impede my progress; but, finding I was very unwilling to abandon the enterprise, he showed me a few notches in the peak, by which we might ascend, though not without danger. This prospect rather abated my courage, and the wind rising, drove several thick clouds round the bottom of the peak, which increasing

every minute, shortly screened the green mountain and all the forest from our sight. A sea of vapours soon undulated beneath my feet, and lightning began to flash from a dark angry cloud, that hung over the valleys, and deluged them with storms, whilst I was securely standing under the clear expanse of ether.

But the hour did not admit of my remaining long in this proud station; so descending, I was soon obliged to pass through the vapours, and, carefully following my guide (for a false step might have caused my destruction), wound amongst the declivities, till we left the peak behind, and just as we reached the green mountain, which was moistened with the late storm, the clouds fleeted and the evening recovered its serenity.

Leaving the chapel of St. Bruno on the right, we entered the woods, and soon emerged from them into a large pasture, under the grand amphitheatre of mountains, having a gentle ascent before us, beyond which appeared the neat blue roofs and glittering spires of the convent, where we arrived as the moon was beginning to assume her empire.

I need not say I rested well after the interesting fatigues of the day. The next morning, early, I quitted my kind hosts with great reluctance. The Coadjutor and two other fathers accompanied me to the outward gate, and there within the solemn circle of the desert bestowed on me their benediction.

It seemed indeed to come from their hearts, nor would they leave me till I was a hundred paces from the convent; and then, laying their hands on their breasts, declared that if ever I was disgusted with the world, here was an asylum.

I was in a melancholy mood when I traced back all the windings of my road, and when I found myself beyond the last gate, in the midst of the wide world again, it increased.

We returned to Les Echelles; from thence to Chamberry, and, instead of going through Aix, passed by Amecy; but nothing in all the route engaged my attention, nor had I any pleasing sensations till I beheld the glassy lake of Geneva, and its lovely environs.

I rejoiced then because I knew of a retirement on its banks where I could sit and think of Valombré.

SALEVE.

LETTER I.

I HAD long wished to revisit the holt of trees so conspicuous on the summit of Saleve, and set forth this morning to accomplish that purpose. Brandoin, an artist, once the delight of our travelling lords and ladies, accompanied me. We rode pleasantly and sketchingly along through Carouge to the base of the mountain, taking views every now and then of picturesque stumps and cottages.

At length, after a good deal of lackadaisical loitering on the banks of the Arve, we reached a sort of goats' path, leading to some steps cut in the rock, and justly called the Pas d'Echelle. I need not say we were obliged to dismount and toil up this ladder, beyond which rise steeps of verdure shaded by walnuts.

These brought us to Moneti, a rude straggling village, with its church tower embosomed in gigantic limes. We availed ourselves of their deep cool shade to dine as comfortably as a whole posse of withered hags, who seemed to have just alighted from their broomsticks, would allow us.

About half-past three, a sledge drawn by four oxen was got ready to drag us up to the holt of trees, the goal to which we were tending: stretching ourselves on the straw spread over our vehicle, we set off along a rugged path, conducted aslant the steep slope of the mountain, vast prospects opening as we ascended; to our right the crags of the little Saleve—the variegated plains of Gex and Chablais, separated by the lake; below, Moneti, almost concealed in wood; behind, the mole, lifting up its pyramidical summit amidst the wild amphi-

theatre of glaciers, which lay this evening in dismal shadow, the sun being overcast, the Jura half lost in rainy mists, and a heavy storm darkening the Fort de l'Ecluse. Except a sickly gleam cast on the snows of the Buet, not a ray of sunshine enlivened our landscape.

This sorrowful colouring agreed but too well with the dejection of my spirits. I suffered melancholy recollections to take full possession of me, and glancing my eyes over the vast map below, sought out those spots where I had lived so happy with my lovely Margaret. On them did I eagerly gaze; —absorbed in the consciousness of a fatal, irreparable loss, I little noticed the transports expressed by my companion at the grand effects of light and shade, which obeyed the movements of the clouds; nor was I more attentive to the route of our oxen, which, perfectly familiarized with precipices, preferred their edge to the bank on the other side, and by this choice gave us an opportunity of looking down more than a thousand feet perpendicularly on the wild shrubberies and shattered rocks deep below, at the base of the mountain. In general I shrink back from such bird's-eye prospects with my head in a whirl, and yet, by a most unaccountable fascination, feel a feverish impulse to throw myself into the very gulph I abhor; but to-day I lay in passive indifference, listlessly extended on our moving bed. Its progress being extremely deliberate, we had leisure to observe, as we crept along, a profusion of Alpine flowers; but none of those gorgeous insects mentioned by Saussure as abounding on Saleve were fluttering about them. This was no favourable day for butterfly excursions; the flowers laden with heavy drops, the forerunners of still heavier rain, hung down their heads. We passed several châlets, formed of mud and stone, instead of the neat timber, with which those on the Swiss mountains are constructed. Meagre peasants, whose sallow countenances looked quite of a piece with the sandy hue of their habitations, kept staring at us from crevices and hollow places: the fresh roses of a garden are not more different from the rank weeds of an unhealthy swamp, than these wretched objects from the ruddy inhabitants of Switzerland.

My heart sank as we were driven alongside of one of these squalid groups, huddled together under a blasted beech, in expectation of a storm. The wind drove the smoke and

sparks of a fire just kindled at the root of the tree, full in the face of an infant, whose mother had abandoned it to implore our charity with outstretched withered hands. The poor helpless being filled the air with wailings, and being tightly swaddled up in yellow rags, according to Savoyarde custom, exhibited an appearance in form and colour not unlike that of an overgrown pumpkin thrown on the ground out of the way. How should I have enjoyed setting its limbs at liberty, and transporting it to the swelling bosom of a Bernese peasant! such as I have seen in untaxed garments, red, blue, and green, with hair falling in braids mixed with flowers and silver trinkets, hurrying along to some wake or wedding, with that firm step and smiling hilarity which the consciousness of freedom inspires.

A few minutes' dragging beyond the tree just mentioned, we reached the bold verdant slopes of delicate short herbage which crown the crags of the mountain. We now moved smoothly along the turf, brushing it with our hands to extract its aromatic fragance, and having no longer rough stones to encounter, our conveyance became so agreeable that we regretted our arrival before a châlet, under a clump of weather-beaten beech. These are the identical trees, so far and widely discovered, on the summit of Saleve, and the point to which we had been tending.

Seating ourselves on the very edge of a rocky cornice, we surveyed the busy crowded territory of Geneva, the vast reach of the lake, its coast, thickset with castles, towns, and villages, and the long line of the Jura protecting these richly cultivated possessions. Turning round, we traced the course of the Arve up to its awful sanctuary, the Alps of Savoy, above which rose the Mont Blanc in deadly paleness, backed by a gloomy sky; nothing could form a stronger contrast to the populous and fertile plains in front of the mountain, than this chaos of snowy peaks and melancholy deserts, the loftiest in the old world, held up in the air, and beaten, in spite of summer, with wintry storms.

I know not how long we should have remained examining the prospect, had the weather been favourable, and had we enjoyed one of those serene evenings to be expected in the month of July. Many such have I passed in my careless childish days, stretched out on the brow of this very mountain,

contemplating the heavenly azure of the lake, the innumerable windows of the villas below blazing in the setting sun, and the glaciers suffused by its last ray with a blushing pink. How often, giving way to youthful enthusiasm, have I peopled these singularly varied peaks with gnomes and fairies, the distributors of gold and crystal to those who adventurously scaled their lofty abode.

This evening my fancy was led to no such gay aërial excursions; sad realities chained it to the earth, and to the scene before my eyes, which, in lowering, sombre hue, corresponded with my interior gloom. A rude blast driving us off the margin of the precipices, we returned to the shelter of the beech. There we found some disappointed butterfly catchers, probably of the watch-making tribe, and a silly boy gaping after them with a lank net and empty boxes. This being Monday, I thought the Saleve had been delivered from such intruders; but it seems that the rage for natural history has so victoriously pervaded all ranks of people in the republic, that almost every day in the week sends forth some of its journeymen to ransack the neighbouring cliffs, and transfix unhappy butterflies.

Silversmiths and toymen, possessed by the spirit of De Luc and De Saussure's lucubrations, throw away the light implements of their trade, and sally forth with hammer and pickaxe to pound pebbles and knock at the door of every mountain for information. Instead of furbishing up teaspoons and sorting watch-chains, they talk of nothing but quartz and feldspath. One flourishes away on the durability of granite, whilst another treats calcareous rocks with contempt; but as human pleasures are seldom perfect and permanent, acrimonious disputes too frequently interrupt the calm of the philosophic excursion. Squabbles arise about the genus of a coralite, or concerning that element which has borne the greatest part in the convulsion of nature. The advocate of water too often sneaks home to his wife with a tattered collar, whilst the partisan of fire and volcanoes lies vanquished in a puddle, or winding up the clue of his argument in a solitary ditch. I cannot help thinking so diffused a taste for fossils and petrifactions of no very particular benefit to the artisans of Geneva, and that watches would go as well, though their makers were less enlightened.

LETTER II.

It began to rain just as we entered the châlet under the beech-trees, and one of the dirtiest I ever crept into—it would have been uncharitable not to have regretted the absence of swine, for here was mud and filth enough to have insured their felicity. A woman, whose teeth of a shining whiteness were the only clean objects I could discover, brought us foaming bowls of cream and milk, with which we regaled ourselves, and then got into our vehicle. We but too soon left the smooth herbage behind, and passed about an hour in rambling down the mountain, pelted by the showers, from which we took shelter under the limes at Moneti.

Here we should have drunk our tea in peace and quietness, had it not been for the incursion of a gang of bandy-legged watchmakers, smoking their pipes, and scraping their fiddles, and snapping their fingers, with all that insolent vulgarity so characteristic of the Rue-basse portion of the Genevese community. We got out of their way, you may easily imagine, as fast as we were able, and descending a rough road, most abominably strewn with rolling pebbles, arrived at the bridge d'Etrombieres just as it fell dark. The mouldering planks with which the bridge is awkwardly put together, sounded suspiciously hollow under the feet of our horses, and had it not been for the friendly light of a pine torch which a peasant brought forth, we might have been tumbled into the Arve.

It was a mild summer night; the rainy clouds were dissolving away with a murmur of distant thunder so faint as to be scarcely heard. From time to time a flash of summer lightning discovered the lonely tower of Moneti on the edge of the lesser Saleve. The ghostly tales, which the old curé of the mountains had told me at a period when I hungered and thirsted after supernatural narrations, recurred to my memory in all their variety of horrors, and kept it fully employed till I found myself under the walls of Geneva. The gates were shut, but I knew they were to be opened again at ten o'clock for the convenience of those returning from the *Comedie.*

The *Comedie* is become of wonderful importance; but a few years ago the very name of a play was held in such abhorrence by the spiritual consistory of Geneva and its obsequious servants,

which then included the best part of the republic, that the partakers and abettors of such diversions were esteemed on the high road to eternal perdition. Though, God knows, I am unconscious of any extreme partiality for Calvin, I cannot help thinking his severe discipline wisely adapted to the moral constitution of this starch bit of a republic, which he took to his grim embraces. But these days of rigidity and plainness are completely gone by; the soft spirit of toleration, so eloquently insinuated by Voltaire, has removed all thorny fences, familiarized his numerous admirers with every innovation, and laughed scruples of every nature to scorn. Voltaire, indeed, may justly be styled the architect of that gay well-ornamented bridge, by which freethinking and immorality have been smuggled into the republic, under the mask of philosophy and liberality and sentiment. These monsters, like the Sin and Death of Milton, have made speedy and irreparable havoc. To facilitate their operations, rose the genius of "Rentes Viagères" at his bidding; tawdry villas with their little pert groves of poplar and horse-chestnut start up; his power enables Madame C. D., the bookseller's lady, to amuse the D. of G. with assemblies, sets Parisian cabriolets and English phaetons rolling from one faro table to another, and launches innumerable pleasure parties with banners and popguns on the lake, drumming and trumpeting away their time from morn till evening. I recollect, not many years past, how seldom the echoes of the mountains were profaned by such noises, and how rarely the drones of Geneva, if any there were in that once industrious city, had opportunities of displaying their idleness; but now Dissipation reigns triumphant, and to pay the tribute she exacts, every fool runs headlong to throw his scrapings into the voracious whirlpool of annuities; little caring, provided he feeds high and lolls in his carriage, what becomes of his posterity. I had ample time to make these reflections, as the *Comedie* lasted longer than usual.

Luckily the night improved, the storms had rolled away, and the moon rising from behind the crags of the lesser Saleve cast a pleasant gleam on the smooth turf of plain-palais, where we walked to and fro above half an hour. We had this extensive level almost entirely to ourselves; no light glimmered in any window, no sound broke the general stillness, except a low murmur proceeding from a group of chestnut trees. There,

snug under a garden wall on a sequestered bench, sat two or three Genevois of the old stamp, chewing the cud of sober sermons—men who receive not more than seven or eight per cent. for their money: there sat they waiting for their young ones, who had been seduced to the theatre.

A loud hubbub and glare of flambeaus proclaiming the end of the play, we left these good folks to their rumination, and regaining our carriage rattled furiously through the streets of Geneva, once so quiet, so silent at these hours, to the no small terror and annoyance of those whom Rentes Viagères had not yet provided with a speedier conveyance than their own legs, or a brighter satellite than an old cook-maid with a candle and lantern.

It was eleven o'clock before we reached home, and near two before I retired to rest, having sat down immediately to write this letter whilst the impressions of the day were fresh in my memory.

PORTUGAL AND SPAIN.

PORTUGAL.

[Portugal attracting much attention in her present convulsed and declining state, it might not perhaps be uninteresting to the public to cast back a glance by way of contrast to the happier times when she enjoyed, under the mild and beneficent reign of Donna Maria the First, a great share of courtly and commercial prosperity.—*March 1st*, 1834.]

LETTER I.

FALMOUTH, *March 6th*, 1787.

THE glass is sinking; the west wind gently breathing upon the water, the smoke softly descending into the room, and sailors yawning dismally at the door of every ale-house.

Navigation seems at a full stop. The captains lounging about with their hands in their pockets, and passengers idling at billiards. Dr. V—— has scraped acquaintance with a quaker, and went last night to one of their assemblies, where he kept jingling his fine Genevan watch-chains to their sober and silent dismay.

In the intervals of the mild showers with which we are blessed, I ramble about some fields already springing with fresh herbage, which slope down to the harbour. The immediate environs of Falmouth are not unpleasant upon better acquaintance. Just out of the town, in a sheltered recess of the bay, lies a grove of tall elms, forming several avenues carpeted with turf. In the central point rises a stone pyramid about thirty feet high, well designed and constructed, but quite plain, without any inscription; between the stems of the trees one discovers a low white house, built in and out in a very capricious manner, with oriel windows and porches, shaded by bushes of prosperous bay. Several rose-coloured cabbages, with leaves as crisped and curled as those of the acanthus, decorate a little grass-plat, neatly swept, before the

door. Over the roof of this snug habitation I spied the skeleton of a Gothic mansion, so completely robed with thick ivy as to appear like one of those castles of clipped box I have often seen in a Dutch garden.

Yesterday evening, the winds being still, and the sun gleaming warm for a moment or two, I visited this spot to examine the ruin, hear birds chirp, and scent wall-flowers.

Two young girls, beautifully shaped, and dressed with a sort of romantic provincial elegance, were walking up and down the grove by the pyramid. There was something so lovelorn in their gestures, that I have no doubt they were sighing out their souls to each other. As a decided amateur of this sort of *confidential promenade*, I would have given my ears to have heard their *confessions*.

LETTER II.

FALMOUTH, *March 7th*, 1787.

Scott came this morning and took me to see the consolidated mines in the parish of Gwynnap: they are situated in a bleak desert, rendered still more doleful by the unhealthy appearance of its inhabitants. At every step one stumbles upon ladders that lead into utter darkness, or funnels that exhale warm copperous vapours. All around these openings the ore is piled up in heaps waiting for purchasers. I saw it drawn reeking out of the mine by the help of a machine called a whim, put in motion by mules, which in their turn are stimulated by impish children hanging over the poor brutes, and flogging them round without respite. This dismal scene of *whims*, suffering mules, and hillocks of cinders, extends for miles. Huge iron engines creaking and groaning, invented by Watt, and tall chimneys smoking and flaming, that seem to belong to old Nicholas's abode, diversify the prospect.

Two strange-looking Cornish beings, dressed in ghostly white, conducted me about, and very kindly proposed a descent into the bowels of the earth, but I declined initiation. These mystagogues occupy a tolerable house, with fair sash windows, where the inspectors of the mine hold their meetings, and regale upon beef, pudding, and brandy.

While I was standing at the door of this habitation, several

woeful figures in tattered garments, with pickaxes on their shoulders, crawled out of a dark fissure and repaired to a hovel, which I learnt was a gin-shop. There they pass the few hours allotted them above ground, and drink, it is to be hoped, an oblivion of their subterraneous existence. Piety as well as gin helps to fill up their leisure moments, and I was told that Wesley, who came apostolising into Cornwall a few years ago, preached on this very spot to above seven thousand followers.

Since this period Methodism has made a very rapid progress, and has been of no trifling service in diverting the attention of these sons of darkness from their present condition to the glories of the life to come. However, some people inform me their actual state is not so much to be lamented, and that, notwithstanding their pale looks and tattered raiment, they are far from being poor or unhealthy. Fortune often throws a considerable sum into their laps when they least expect it, and many a common miner has been known to gain a hundred pounds in the space of a month or two. Like sailors in the first effusion of prize-money, they have no notion of turning their good luck to advantage; but squander the fruits of their toil in the silliest species of extravagance. Their wives are dressed out in tawdry silks, and flaunt away in ale-houses between rows of obedient fiddlers. The money spent, down they sink again into damps and darkness.

Having passed about an hour in collecting minerals, stopping engines with my finger, and performing all the functions of a diligent young man desirous of information, I turned my back on smokes, flames, and coal-holes, with great pleasure.

Not above a mile-and-a-half from this black bustling scene, in a sheltered valley, lies the mansion of Mr. Beauchamp, wrapped up in shrubberies of laurel and laurustine. Copses of hazel and holly terminate the prospect on almost every side, and in the midst of the glen a broad clear stream reflects the impending vegetation. This transparent water, after performing the part of a mirror before the house, forms a succession of waterfalls which glitter between slopes of the smoothest turf, sprinkled with daffodils: numerous flights of widgeon and Muscovy ducks were sprucing themselves on the edge of the stream, and two grave swans seemed highly to approve of its woody retired banks for the education of their progeny.

Very glad was I to disport on its "margent green," after

crushing cinders at every step all the morning; had not the sun hid himself, and the air grown chill, I might have fooled away three or four hours with the swans and the widgeons, and lost my dinner. Upon my return home, I found the wind as contrary as ever, and all thoughts of sailing abandoned.

LETTER III.

FALMOUTH, *March 8th*, 1787.

What a lovely morning! how glassy the sea, how busy the fishing-boats, and how fast asleep the wind in its old quarter! Towards evening, however, it freshened, and I took a toss in a boat with Mr. Trefusis, whose territories extend half round the bay. His green hanging downs spotted with sheep, and intersected by rocky gullies, shaded by tall straight oaks and ashes, form a romantic prospect, very much in the style of Mount Edgcumbe.

We drank tea at the capital of these dominions, an antiquated mansion, which is placed in a hollow on the summit of a lofty hill, and contains many ruinous halls and never-ending passages; they cannot, however, be said to lead to nothing, like those celebrated by Gray in his Long Story, for Mrs. Trefusis terminated the perspective. She is a native of Lausanne, and was quite happy to see her countryman Verdeil.

We should have very much enjoyed her conversation, but the moment tea was over, the squire could not resist leading us round his improvements in kennel, stable, and ox-stall: though it was pitch-dark, and we were obliged to be escorted by grooms and groomlings with candles and lanterns; a very necessary precaution, as the winds blew not more violently without the house than within.

In the course of our peregrination through halls, pantries, and antechambers, we passed a staircase with heavy walnut-railing, lined from top to bottom with effigies of ancestors that looked quite formidable by the horny glow of our lanterns; which illumination, dull as it was, occasioned much alarm amongst a collection of animals, both furred and feathered, the delight of Mr. Trefusis's existence.

Every corner of his house contains some strange and stinking inhabitant; one can hardly move without stumbling over a

basket of puppies, or rolling along a mealy tub, with ferrets in the bottom of it; rap went my head against a wire cage, and behold a squirrel twirled out of its sleep in sad confusion: a little further on, I was very near being the destruction of some new-born dormice—their feeble squeak haunts my ears at this moment!

Beyond this nursery, a door opened and admitted us into a large saloon, in the days of Mr. Trefusis's father very splendidly decorated, but at present exhibiting nothing, save damp plastered walls, mouldering floors, and cracked windows. A well-known perfume issuing from this apartment, proclaimed the neighbourhood of those fragrant animals, which you perfectly recollect were the joy of my infancy, and presently three or four couple of spanking yellow rabbits made their appearance. A racoon poked his head out of a coop, whilst an owl lifted up the gloom of his countenance, and gave us his malediction.

My nose having lost all relish for *rabbitish* odours, took refuge in my handkerchief; there did I keep it snug till it pleased our conductors to light us through two or three closets, all of a flutter with Virginian nightingales, goldfinches, and canary-birds, into the stable. Several game-cocks fell a-crowing with most triumphant shrillness upon our approach; and a monkey—the image of poor Brandoin—expanded his jaws in so woeful a manner, that I grew melancholy, and paid the hunters not half the attention they merited.

At length we got into the open air again, made our bows, and departed. The evening was become serene and pleasant, the moon beamed brilliantly on the sea; but the owls, who are never to be pleased, hooted most ruefully.

Good-night: I expect to dream of *closed-up doors*,* and haunted passages; rats, puppies, racoons, game-cocks, rabbits, and dormice.

LETTER IV.

FALMOUTH, *March 10th*, 1787.

I thought last night our thin pasteboard habitation would have been blown into the sea, for never in my life did I hear such dreadful blusterings. Perhaps the winds are celebrating

* See Miss Williams's poems.

the approach of the equinox, or some high festival in Æolus's calendar, with which we poor mortals are unacquainted. How tired I am of the language of the compass, of wind shifting to this point and veering to the other; of gales springing up, and breezes freshening; of rough seas, clear berths, ships driving, and anchors lifting. Oh! that I was rooted like a tree, in some sheltered corner of an inland valley, where I might never hear more of salt water or sailing.

You cannot wonder at my becoming impatient, after eleven days' captivity, nor at my wishing myself anywhere but where I am: I should almost prefer a quarantine party at the new elegant Lazaretto off Marseilles, to this smoky residence; at least, I might there learn some curious particulars of the Levant, enjoy bright sunshine, and perfect myself in Arabic. But what can a being of my turn do at Falmouth? I have little taste for the explanation of fire-engines, Mr. Scott; the pursuit of hares under the auspices of young Trefusis; or the gliding of billiard-balls in the society of Barbadoes Creoles and packet-boat captains. The Lord have mercy upon me! now, indeed, do I perform penance.

Our dinner yesterday went off tolerably well. We had *on* the table a savoury pig, right worthy of Otaheite, and some of the finest poultry I ever tasted; and *round* the table two or three brace of odd Cornish gentlefolks, not deficient in humour and originality.

About eight in the evening, six game-cocks were ushered into the eating-room by two limber lads in scarlet jackets; and, after a flourish of crowing, the noble birds set-to with surprising keenness. Tufts of brilliant feathers soon flew about the apartment! but the carpet was not stained with the blood of the combatants: for, to do Trefusis justice, he has a generous heart, and takes no pleasure in cruelty. The cocks were unarmed, had their spurs cut short, and may live to fight fifty such harmless battles.

LETTER V.

FALMOUTH, *March 11th*, 1787.

What a fool was I to leave my beloved retirement at Evian! Instead of viewing innumerable transparent rills

falling over the amber-coloured rocks of Melierie, I am chained down to contemplate an oozy beach, deserted by the sea, and becrawled with worms tracking their way in the slime that harbours them. Instead of the cheerful crackling of a wood-fire in the old baron's great hall, I hear the bellowing of winds in narrow chimneys. You must allow the aromatic fragrance of fircones, such heaps of which I used to burn in Savoy, is greatly preferable to the exhalations of Welsh coal, and that to a person wrapped up in musical devotion, high mass must be a good deal superior to the hummings and hawings of a Quaker assembly. Colett swears he had rather be boarded at the Inquisition than remain at the mercy of the confounded keeper of this hotel, the worst and the dearest in Christendom. We are all tired to death, and know not what to do with ourselves.

As I look upon ennui to be very catching, I shall break off before I give you a share of it.

LETTER VI.

FALMOUTH, *March 13th*, 1787.

No prospect of launching this day upon the ocean. Every breeze is subsided, and a profound calm established. I walk up and down the path which leads to Pen-dennis Castle with folded arms, in a most listless desponding mood. Vast brakes of furze, much stouter and loftier than any with which I am acquainted, scent the air with the perfume of apricots. Primroses, violets, and fresh herbs innumerable expand on every bank. Larks, poised in the soft blue sky, warble delightfully. The sea, far and wide, is covered with fishing-boats; and such a stillness prevails, that I hear the voices of the fishermen.

You will be rambling in sheltered alleys, whilst winds and currents drive me furiously along craggy shores, under the scowl of a tempestuous sky. You will be angling for perch, whilst sharks are whetting their teeth at me. Methinks I hear the voracious gluttons disputing the first snap, and pointing upwards their cold slimy noses. Out upon them! I have no desire to invade their element, or (using poetical language) to plough those plains of waves which brings them

rich harvests of carcasses, and had much rather cling fast to the green banks of Pen-dennis. I even prefer mining to sailing; and of the two, had rather be swallowed up by the earth than the ocean.

I wish some "swart fairy of the mine" would snatch me to her concealments. Rather than pass a month in the qualms of sea-sickness, I would consent to live three by candlelight, in the deepest den you could discover, stuck close to a foul midnight hag as mouldy as a rotten apple.

This, you will tell me, is being very energetic in my aversions,—that I allow; but such, you know, is my trim, and I cannot help it.

LETTER VII.

May 30th, 1787.—Horne persuaded me much against my will to accompany him in his Portuguese chaise to Pagliavam, the residence of John the Fifth's bastards, instead of following my usual track along the sea-shore. The roads to this stately garden are abominable, and more infested by beggars, dogs, flies, and musquitoes, than any I am acquainted with. The villa itself, which belongs to the Marquis of Lourical, is placed in a hollow, and the tufted groves which surround it admit not a breath of air; so I was half suffocated the moment I entered their shade.

A great flat space before the garden-front of the villa is laid out in dismal labyrinths of clipped myrtle, with lofty pyramids rising from them, in the style of that vile Dutch maze planted by King William at Kensington, and rooted up some years ago by King George the Third. Beyond this puzzling ground are several long alleys of stiff dark verdure, called *ruas*, *i.e.* literally streets, with great propriety, being more close, more formal, and not less dusty than High Holborn. I deviated from them into plats of well-watered vegetables and aromatic herbs, inclosed by neat fences of cane, covered with an embroidery of the freshest and most perfect roses, quite free from insects and cankers, worthy to have strewn the couches and graced the bosom of Lais, Aspasia, or Lady ——. You know how warmly every mortal of taste delights in these lovely flowers; how frequently, and in what

harmonious numbers, Ariosto has celebrated them. Has not Lady —— a whole apartment painted over with roses? Does she not fill her bath with their leaves, and deck her idols with garlands of no other flowers? and is she not quite in the right of it?

Whilst I was poetically engaged with the roses, Horne entered into conversation with a sort of Anglo-Portuguese master of the horse to their bastard highnesses. He had a snug well-powdered wig, a bright silver-hilted sword, a crimson full-dress suit, and a gently bulging paunch. With one hand in his bosom and the other in the act of taking snuff, he harangued emphatically upon the holiness, temperance, and chastity of his august masters, who live sequestered from the world in dingy silent state, abhor profane company, and never cast a look upon females.

Being curious to see the abode of these semi-royal sober personages, I entered the palace. Not an insect stirred, not a whisper was audible. The principal apartments consist in a suite of lofty-coved saloons, nobly proportioned, and uniformly hung with damask of the deepest crimson. The upper end of each room is doubly shaded by a ponderous canopy of cut velvet. To the right and left appear rows of huge elbow-chairs of the same materials. No glasses, no pictures, no gilding, no decoration, but heavy drapery; even the tables are concealed by cut velvet flounces, in the style of those with which our dowagers used formerly to array their toilets. The very sight of such close tables is enough to make one perspire; and I cannot imagine what demon prompted the Portuguese to invent such a fusty fashion.

This taste for putting commodes and tables into petticoats is pretty general here, at least in royal apartments. At Queluz not a card or dining-table has escaped; and many an old court-dress, I should suspect, has been cut up to furnish these accoutrements, which are of all colours, plain and flowered, pastorally sprigged or gorgeously embroidered. Not so at Pagliavam. Crimson alone prevails, and casts its royal gloom unrivalled on every object. Stuck fast to the wall, between two of the aforementioned tables, are two fauteuils for their highnesses; and opposite, a rank of chairs for those reverend fathers in God who from time to time are honoured with admittance.

How mighty is the force of education!—What pains it must require on the part of nurses, equerries, and chamberlains, to stifle every lively and generous sensation in the princelings they educate,—to break a human being into the habits of impotent royalty! Dignity without command is one of the heaviest of burthens. A sovereign may employ himself; he has the choice of good or evil; but princes, like those of Pagliavam, without power or influence, who have nothing to feed on but imaginary greatness, must yawn their souls out, and become in process of time as formal and inanimate as the pyramids of stunted myrtle in their gardens. Happier were those babies King John did not think proper to recognise, and they are not few in number, for that pious monarch,

"Wide as his command,
Scattered his Maker's image through the land."

They, perhaps, whilst their brothers are gaping under rusty canopies, twinkle their guitars in careless moonlight rambles, wriggle in gay fandangos, or enjoy sound sleep, rural fare, and merriment, in the character of jolly village curates.

I was glad to get out of the palace: its stillness and gloom depressed my spirits, and a confined atmosphere, impregnated with the smell of burnt lavender, almost overcame me. I am just returned gasping for air. No wonder; one might as well be in bed with a warming-pan as in a Portuguese cariole with the portly Horne, who carries a noble protuberance, set off in this season with a satin waistcoat richly spangled.

I must go to Cintra, or I shall expire!

LETTER VIII.

May 31*st*, 1787.—It is in vain I call upon clouds to cover me and fogs to wrap me up. You can form no adequate idea of the continual glare of this renowned climate. Lisbon is the place in the world best calculated to make one cry out,

"Hide me from day's garish eye;"

but where to hide is not so easy. Here are no thickets of pine as in the classic Italian villas, none of those quivering

poplars and leafy chestnuts which cover the plains of Lombardy. The groves in the immediate environs of this capital are composed of—with, alas! but few exceptions—dwarfish orange-trees and cinder-coloured olives. Under their branches repose neither shepherds nor shepherdesses, but whitening bones, scraps of leather, broken pantiles, and passengers not unfrequently attended by monkeys, who, I have been told, are let out for the purpose of picking up a livelihood. Those who cannot afford this apish luxury, have their bushy poles untenanted by affectionate relations, for yesterday just under my window I saw two blessed babies rendering this good office to their aged parent.

I had determined not to have stirred beyond the shade of my awning; however, towards eve, the extreme fervour of the sun being a little abated, old Horne (who has yet a colt's-tooth) prevailed upon me to walk in the Botanic Gardens, where not unfrequently are to be found certain youthful animals of the female gender called Açafatas, in Portuguese; a species between a bedchamber woman and a maid of honour. The Queen has kindly taken the ugliest with her to the Caldas: those who remain have large black eyes sparkling with the true spirit of adventure, an exuberant flow of dark hair, and pouting lips of the colour and size of full-blown roses.

All this, you will tell me, does not compose a perfect beauty. I never meant to convey such a notion: I only wish you to understand that the nymphs we have just quitted are the flowers of the Queen's flock, and that she has, at least, four or five dozen more in attendance upon her sacred person, with larger mouths, smaller eyes, and swarthier complexions.

Not being in sufficient spirits to flourish away in Portuguese, my conversation was chiefly addressed to a lovely blue-eyed Irish girl of fifteen or sixteen, lately married to an officer of her Majesty's customs. Spouse goes a-pilgrimaging to Nossa Senhora do Cabo—little madam whisks about the Botanic Garden with the ladies of the palace and a troop of sopranos, who teach her to warble and speak Italian. She is well worth teaching everything in their power. Her hair of the loveliest auburn, her straight Grecian eyebrows and fair complexion, form a striking contrast to the gipsy-coloured skins and jetty tresses of her companions. She looked like a visionary being

skimming along the alleys, and leaving the pot-bellied sopranos and dowdy Açafatas far behind, wondering at her agility.

The garden is pleasant enough, situated upon an eminence, planted with light flowering trees clustered with blossoms. Above their topmost branches rises a broad majestic terrace, with marble balustrades of shining whiteness and strange Oriental pattern. They design indifferently in this country, but execute with great neatness and decision. I never saw balustrades better hewn or chiselled than those bordering the steps which lead up to the grand terrace. Its ample surface is laid out in oblong compartments of marble containing no very great variety of heliotropes, aloes, geraniums, China roses, and the commonest plants of our green-houses. Such ponderous divisions have a dismal effect; they reminded one of a place of interment, and it struck me as if the deceased inhabitants of the adjoining palace were sprouting up in the shape of prickly-pears, Indian figs, gaudy holly-oaks, and peppery capsicums.

The terrace is about fifteen hundred paces in length. Three copious fountains give it an air of coolness, much increased by the waving of tall acacias, exposed by their lofty situation to every breeze which blows from the entrance of the Tagus, whose lovely azure appears to great advantage between the quivering foliage.

The Irish girl and your faithful correspondent coursed each other like children along the terrace, and when tired reposed under a group of gigantic Brazilian aloes by one of the fountains. The swarthy party detached its principal guardian, a gawky young priest, to observe all the wanderings and riposos of us white people.

It was late, and the sun had set several minutes before I took my departure. Black eyes and blue eyes seem horridly jealous of each other. I fear my youthful and lively companion will suffer for having more alertness than the Açafatas: she will be pinched, if I am not mistaken, as the party return through the dark and intricate passages which join the palace of the Ajuda to the gardens. Sad thought, the leaving such a fair little being in the hands of fiery, despotic females, so greatly her inferiors in complexion and delicacy.

They will take especial care, I warrant them, to fill the husband's head with suspicions less charitable than those inspired by Nossa Senhora do Cabo.

LETTER IX.

June 3rd, 1787.—We went by special invitation to the royal convent of the Necessidades, belonging to the Oratorians, to see the ceremony of consecrating a father of that order Bishop of Algarve, and were placed fronting the altar in a gallery crowded with important personages in shining raiment, the relations of the new prelate. The floor being spread with rich Persian carpets and velvet cushions, it was pretty good kneeling; but, notwithstanding this comfortable accommodation, I thought the ceremony would never finish. There was a mighty glitter of crosses, censers, mitres, and crosiers, continually in motion, as several bishops assisted in all their pomp.

The music, which was extremely simple and pathetic, appeared to affect the grandees in my neighbourhood very profoundly, for they put on woeful contrite countenances, thumped their breasts, and seemed to think themselves, as most of them are, miserable sinners. Feeling oppressed by the heat and the sermon, I made my retreat slyly and silently from the splendid gallery, and passed through some narrow corridors, as warm as flues, into the garden.

But this was only exchanging one scene of formality and closeness for another. I panted after air, and to obtain that blessing escaped through a little narrow door into the wild free valley of Alcantara. Here all was solitude and humming of bees, and fresh gales blowing from the entrance of the Tagus over the tufted tops of orange gardens. The refreshing sound of water-wheels seemed to give me new life.

I set the sun at defiance, and advanced towards that part of the valley across which stretches the enormous aqueduct you have heard so often mentioned as the most colossal edifice of its kind in Europe. It has only one row of pointed openings, and the principal arch, which crosses a rapid brook, measures above two hundred and fifty feet in height. The Pont de Garde and Caserta have several rows of arches one above the other, which, by dividing the attention, take off from the size of the whole. There is a vastness in this single range that strikes with astonishment. I sat down on a fragment of rock, under the great arch, and looked up to the vaulted stone-work so high above me with a sensation of awe not unallied to fear;

as if the building I gazed upon was the performance of some immeasurable being endued with gigantic strength, who might perhaps take a fancy to saunter about his works this morning, and, in mere awkwardness, crush me to atoms.

Hard by the spot where I sat are several inclosures filled with canes, eleven or twelve feet high: their fresh green leaves, agitated by the feeblest wind, form a perpetual murmur. I am fond of this rustling, and suffered myself to be lulled by it into a state of very necessary repose after the fatigues of scrambling over crags and precipices.

As soon as I returned from my walk, Horne took me to dine with him, and afterwards to the Marialva palace to pay the Grand Prior a visit. The court-yard, filled with shabby two-wheeled chaises, put me in mind of the entrance of a French post-house: a recollection not weakened by the sight of several ample heaps of manure, between which we made the best of our way up the great staircase, and had near tumbled over a swinging sow and her numerous progeny, which escaped from under our legs with bitter squeakings.

This hubbub announced our arrival: so out came the Grand Prior, his nephew, the old Abade, and a troop of domestics. All great Portuguese families are infested with herds of these, in general, ill-favoured dependants; and none more than the Marialvas, who dole out every day three hundred portions, at least, of rice and other eatables to as many greedy devourers.

The Grand Prior had shed his pontifical garments, and did the honours of the house, and conducted us with much agility all over the apartments, and through the *manége*, where the old Marquis, his brother, though at a very advanced age, displays feats of the most consummate horsemanship. He seems to have a decided taste for clocks, compasses, and time-keepers. I counted no less than ten in his bedchamber; four or five in full swing, making a loud hissing: they were chiming and striking away (for it was exactly six) when I followed my conductor up and down half-a-dozen staircases into a saloon hung with rusty damask.

A table in the centre of this antiquated apartment was covered with rarities brought forth for our inspection: curious shell-work, ivory crucifixes, models of ships, housings, embroidered with feathers, and the Lord knows what besides, stinking of camphor enough to knock one down.

Whilst we were staring with all our eyes and holding our handkerchiefs to our noses, the Count of V——, Viceroy of Algarve, made his appearance, in grand pea-green and pink and silver gala, straddling and making wry faces, as if some disagreeable accident had befallen him. He was, however, in a most gracious mood, and received our eulogiums upon his relation, the new bishop, with much complacency. Our conversation was limpingly carried on in a great variety of broken languages. Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, French, and English had each their turn in rapid succession. The subject of all this polyglottery was the glories and piety of John the Fifth, regret for the extinction of the Jesuits, and the reverse for the death of Pombal, whose memory he holds in something not distantly removed from execration. This flow of eloquence was accompanied by the strangest, most buffoonical grimaces and slobberings I ever beheld, for the Viceroy having a perennial moistness of mouth, drivels at every syllable.

One must not, however, decide too hastily upon outward appearances. This slobbering, canting personage is a distinguished statesman and good officer, pre-eminent amongst the few who have seen service and given proofs of prowess and capacity.

To escape the long-winded narrations which were pouring warm into my ear, I took refuge near a harpsichord, where Policarpio, one of the first tenors in the Queen's chapel, was singing and accompanying himself. The curtains of the door of an adjoining dark apartment being half drawn, gave me a transient glimpse of Donna Henriquetta de L——, Don Pedro's sister, advancing one moment and retiring the next, eager to approach and examine us exotic beings, but not venturing to enter the saloon during her mother's absence. She appeared to me a most interesting girl, with eyes full of bewitching languor ;—but of what do I talk ? I only saw her pale and evanescent, as one fancies one sees objects in a dream. A group of lovely children (her sisters, I believe) sat at her feet upon the ground, resembling genii partially concealed by folds of drapery in some grand allegorical picture by Rubens or Paul Veronese.

Night approaching, lights glimmered on the turrets, terraces, and every part of the strange huddle of buildings of which this

morisco-looking palace is composed; half the family were engaged in reciting the litanies of saints, the other in freaks and frolics, perhaps of no very edifying nature: the monotonous staccato of the guitar, accompanied by the low soothing murmur of female voices singing modinhas, formed altogether a strange though not unpleasant combination of sounds.

I was listening to them with avidity, when a glare of flambeaux, and the noise of a splashing and dashing of water, called us out upon the verandas, in time to witness a procession scarcely equalled since the days of Noah. I doubt whether his ark contained a more heterogeneous collection of animals than issued from a scalera with fifty oars, which had just landed the old Marquis of M. and his son Don Josè, attended by a swarm of musicians, poets, bull-fighters, grooms, monks, dwarfs, and children of both sexes, fantastically dressed.

The whole party, it seems, were returned from a pilgrimage to some saint's nest or other on the opposite shore of the Tagus. First jumped out a hump-backed dwarf, blowing a little squeaking trumpet three or four inches long; then a pair of led captains, apparently commanded by a strange, old, swaggering fellow in a showy uniform, who, I was told, had acted the part of a sort of brigadier-general in some sort of an island. Had it been Barataria, Sancho would soon have sent him about his business, for, if we believe the scandalous chronicle of Lisbon, a more impudent buffoon, parasite, and pilferer seldom existed.

Close at his heels stalked a savage-looking monk, as tall as Sampson, and two Capuchin friars, heavily laden, but with what sort of provision I am ignorant; next came a very slim and sallow-faced apothecary, in deep sables, completely answering in gait and costume the figure one fancies to one's self of Senhor Apuntador, in *Gil Blas*, followed by a half-crazed improvisatore, spouting verses at us as he passed under the balustrades against which we were leaning.

He was hardly out of hearing before a confused rabble of watermen and servants with bird-cages, lanterns, baskets of fruit, and chaplets of flowers, came gamboling along, to the great delight of a bevy of children; who, to look more like the inhabitants of heaven than even Nature designed, had light fluttering wings attached to their rose-coloured shoulders.

Some of these little theatrical angels were extremely beautiful, and had their hair most coquettishly arranged in ringlets.

The old Marquis is dotingly fond of them; night and day they remain with him, imparting all the advantages that can possibly be derived from fresh and innocent breath to a declining constitution. The patriarch of the Marialvas has followed this regimen many years, and also some others which are scarcely credible. Having a more than Roman facility of swallowing an immense profusion of dainties, and making room continually for a fresh supply, he dines alone every day between two silver canteens of extraordinary magnitude. Nobody in England would believe me if I detailed the enormous repast I saw spread out for him; but let your imagination loose upon all that was ever conceived in the way of gormandizing, and it will not in this case exceed the reality.

As soon as the contents, animal and vegetable, of the principal scalera, and three or four other barges in its train, had been deposited in their respective holes, corners, and roosting-places, I received an invitation from the old Marquis to partake of a collation in his apartment. Not less, I am certain, than fifty servants were in waiting, and exclusive of half-a-dozen wax-torches, which were borne in state before us, above a hundred tapers of different sizes were lighted up in the range of rooms, intermingled with silver braziers and cassolettes, diffusing a very pleasant perfume.

I found the master of all this magnificence most courteous, affable, and engaging. There is an urbanity and good-humour in his looks, gestures, and tone of voice, that prepossesses instantaneously in his favour, and justifies the universal popularity he enjoys, and the affectionate name of Father, by which the Queen and Royal Family often address him. All the favours of the crown have been heaped upon him by the present and preceding sovereigns, a tide of prosperity uninterrupted even during the grand vizariat of Pombal. "Act as you judge wisest with the rest of my nobility," used to say the King Don Joseph to this redoubted minister; "but beware how you interfere with the Marquis of Marialva."

In consequence of this decided predilection, the Marialva palace became in many cases a sort of rallying point, an asylum for the oppressed; and its master, in more than one instance, a shield against the thunderbolts of a too powerful

minister. The recollections of these times seem still to be kept alive; for the heart-felt respect, the filial adoration, I saw paid the old Marquis, was indeed most remarkable; his slightest glances were obeyed, and the person on whom they fell seemed gratified and animated; his sons, the Marquis of Tancos and Don Josè de Meneses, never approached to offer him anything without bending the knee; and the Conde de Villaverde, the heir of the great house of Anjeja, as well as the Viceroy of Algarve, stood in the circle which was formed around him, receiving a kind or gracious word with the same thankful earnestness as courtiers who hang upon the smiles and favour of their sovereign. I shall long remember the grateful sensations with which this scene of reciprocal kindness filled me; it appeared an interchange of amiable sentiments; beneficence diffused without guile or affectation, and protection received without sullen or abject servility.

How preferable is patriarchal government of this nature to the cold theories pedantic sophists would establish, and which, should success attend their selfish atheistical ravings, bid fair to undermine the best and surest props of society! When parents cease to be honoured by their children, and the feelings of grateful subordination in those of helpless age or condition are unknown, kings will soon cease to reign, and republics to be governed by the councils of experience; anarchy, rapine, and massacre will walk the earth, and the abode of demons be transferred from hell to our unfortunate planet.

LETTER X.

June 7th.—A most sonorous peal of bells, an alarming rattle of drums, and a piercing flourish of trumpets, roused me at daybreak. You are too piously disposed to be ignorant that this day is the festival of the Corpo de Deos. I had half a mind to have stayed at home, turning over a curious collection of Portuguese chronicles the Prior of Aviz has just sent to me; but I was told such wonders of the expected procession, that I could not refuse giving myself a little trouble in order to witness them.

Everybody was gone before I set out, and the streets of the suburb I inhabit, as well as those in the city through which I

passed in my way to the patriarchal cathedral, were entirely deserted. A pestilence seemed to have swept the Great Square and the busy environs of the Exchange and India House; for even vagrants, scavengers, and beggars, in the last state of decrepitude, had all hobbled away to the scene of action. A few miserable curs sniffing at offals alone remained in the deserted streets, and I saw no human being at any of the windows, except half-a-dozen scabby children blubbering at being kept at home.

The murmur of the crowds, assembled round the *patriarchale*, reached us a long while before we got into the midst of them, for we advanced with difficulty between rows of soldiers drawn up in battle array. Upon turning a dark angle, overshadowed by the high buildings of the seminary adjoining the patriarchale, we discovered houses, shops, and palaces, all metamorphosed into tents, and hung from top to bottom with red damask, tapestry, satin coverlids, and fringed counterpanes glittering with gold. I thought myself in the midst of the Mogul's encampment, so pompously described by Bernier.

The front of the Great Church in particular was most magnificently curtained: it rises from a vast flight of steps, which were covered to-day with the yeomen of the Queen's guard in their rich party-coloured velvet dresses, and a multitude of priests bearing a gorgeous variety of painted and silken banners; flocks of sallow monks, white, brown, and black, kept pouring in continually, like turkeys driving to market.

This part of the holy display lasting a tiresome while, I grew weary, and left the balcony, where we were placed most advantageously, and got into the church. High mass was performing with awful pomp, incense ascending in clouds, and the light of innumerable tapers blazing on the diamonds of the ostensory, just elevated by the patriarch with trembling devout hands to receive the mysterious wafer.

Before the close of the ceremony, I regained my window, to have a full view of the coming forth of the Sacrament. All was expectation and silence in the people. The guards had ranged them on each side of the steps before the entrance of the church. At length a shower of aromatic herbs and flowers announced the approach of the patriarch, bearing the Host under a regal canopy, surrounded by grandees, and preceded by a long train of mitred figures, their hands joined in prayer,

their scarlet and purple vestments sweeping the ground, their attendants bearing croziers, crosses, and other insignia of pontifical grandeur.

The procession slowly descending the flights of stairs to the sound of choirs and the distant thunder of artillery, lost itself in a winding street decorated with embroidered hangings, and left me with my senses in a whirl, and my eyes dazzled, as if awakened from a vision of celestial splendour. . . . My head swims at this moment, and my ears tingle with a confusion of sounds, bells, voices, and the echoes of cannon, prolonged by mountains and wafted over waters.

LETTER XI.

June 11th, 1787.—To-day we were engaged to dine in the country at a villa belonging to a gentleman, whose volley of names, when pronounced with the true Portuguese twang, sounds like an expectoration—Josè Street-Arriaga-Brum da Silveira. Our hospitable host is of Irish extraction, boasts a stature of six feet, proportionable breadth, a ruddy countenance, herculean legs, and all the exterior attributes, at least, of that enterprising race, who often have the luck of marrying great fortunes. About a year or two ago he bore off a wealthy Brazilian heiress, and is now master of a large estate and a fubsical, squat wife, with a head not unlike that of Holofernes in old tapestry, and shoulders that act the part of a platter with rather too much exactitude. Poor soul! to be sure, she is neither a Venus nor a Hebe, has a rough lip, and a manly voice, and I fear is somewhat inclined to be dropsical; but her smiles are frequent and fondling, and she cleaves to her husband with great perseverance.

He is an odd character, will accept of no employment, civil or military, and affects a bullying frankness, that I should think must displease very much in this country, where independence either in fortune or sentiment is a crime seldom if ever tolerated.

Mr. S—— likes a display, and the repast he gave us was magnificent; sixty dishes at least, eight smoking roasts, and every ragout, French, English, and Portuguese, that could be thought of. The dessert appeared like the model of a fortification. The principal cake-tower measured, I dare say, three

feet perpendicular in height. The company was not equal either in number or consequence to the splendour of the entertainment.

Had not Miss Sill and Bezerra been luckily in my neighbourhood, I should have perished with *ennui*. One stately damsel, with portentous eyebrows, and looks that reproached the male part of the assembly with inattention, was the only lady of the palace Mr. S—— had invited.

I expected to have met the whole troop of my Botanic Garden acquaintance, and to have escorted them about the vineyards and citron-orchards which surround this villa; but, alas! I was not destined to any such amusing excursion. The tragic damsel, who I am told has been unhappy in her tender attachments, took my arm, and never quitted it during a long walk through Mr. S——'s ample possessions. We conversed in Italian, and paid the birds that were singing, and the rills that were murmuring, many fine compliments in a sort of prose run mad, borrowed from operas and serenatas, the Aminto of Tasso, and the Adone of Marini.

The sun was just diffusing his last rays over the distant rocks of Cintra, the air balsamic, and the paths amongst the vines springing with fresh herbage and a thousand flowers revived by last night's rain. Giving up the narrow tract which leads through these rural regions to the signora, I stalked by her side in a furrow well garnished with nettles, acanthus, and dwarf aloes, stinging and scratching myself at every step. This penance, and the disappointment I was feeling most acutely, put me not a little out of humour; I regretted so delicious an evening should pass away in such forlorn company, and lacerating my legs to so little purpose. How should I have enjoyed rambling with the young Irish girl about these pleasant clover paths, between festoons of luxuriant leaves and tendrils, not fastened to stiff poles and stumpy stakes as in France and Switzerland, but climbing up light canes eight or ten feet in height!

Pinioned as I was, you may imagine I felt no inclination to prolong a walk which already had been prolonged unconscionably. I escaped tea and playing at voltarete, made a solemn bow to the solemn damsel, and got home before it was quite dark.

LETTER XII.

June 12th, 1787.—We passed the day quite *en famille* at Belem with a whole legion of Marialvas. Some reverend fathers, of I know not what community, had sent them immense messes of soup, very thick, slabby, and oily; a portion which, it seems, the faithful are accustomed to swallow on the eve of St. Anthony's festival.

As soon as I decently could, after a collation which was served under an awning stretched over one of the terraces, I stole out of the circle of lords, ladies, dwarfs, monks, buffoons, bullies, and almoners, to visit the neighbouring monastery. I ascended the great stairs, constructed at the expense of the Infanta Catherine, King Charles the Second's dowager, and after walking in the cloisters of Emanuel, looked into the library, which is far from being in the cleanest or best ordered condition. The spacious and lofty cloisters present a striking spread of arches, which, though not in the purest style, attract the eye by their delicately-carved arabesque ornament, and the warm reddish hue of the marble. The corridor, into which opens an almost endless range of cells, is full five hundred feet in length. Each window has a commodious resting-place, where the monks loll at their ease and enjoy the view of the river.

In a little dark treasury communicating by winding stairs with that part of the edifice tradition points out as the habitation of King Emanuel, when at certain holy seasons he retired within these precincts, I was shown by candlelight some extremely curious plate, particularly a custodium, made in the year 1506, of the pure gold of Quiloa. Nothing can be more beautiful as a specimen of elaborate Gothic sculpture than this complicated enamelled mass of flying buttresses and fretted pinnacles, with the twelve Apostles in their niches, under canopies formed of ten thousand wreaths and ramifications.

From this gloomy recess, I was conducted to the church, one of the largest in Portugal, vast, solemn, and fantastic, like the interior of the Temple of Jerusalem, as I have seen it figured in some old German Bibles. There was little,

however, in the altars or monuments worth any very minute investigation.

It fell dark before I went out at the great porch, and found the wide space before it beginning to catch a vivid gleam from a line of bonfires on the edge of the Tagus. I could hardly reach my carriage without being singed by squibs and crackers, and wished myself out the moment I got into it, a rocket having shot up just under the noses of my mules and scared them terribly.

Unless St. Anthony lulls me asleep by a miracle, I must expect no rest to-night, there is such a whizzing of fireworks, blazing of bonfires, and flourishing of French horns in honour of to-morrow, the five hundred and fifty-fifth anniversary of that memorable day, when the Holy One of Lisbon passed by a soft transition to the joys of paradise. I saw his image at the door of almost every house and even hovel of this populous capital, placed on an altar, and decked with a profusion of wax-lights and flowers.

LETTER XIII.

June 13th, 1787.—I slept better than I expected: the Saint was propitious, and during the night cooled the ardour of his votaries and the flames of their bonfires by a vernal shower, which pattered agreeably this morning amongst the vine-leaves of my garden. The clouds dispersed about eight o'clock, and at nine, just as I ascended the steps of the new church, built over the identical house where St. Anthony was born, the sun shone out in all its splendour.

I cannot say this edifice recalled to my mind the magnificent sanctuary of Padua, which five years ago on this very day impressed my imagination so forcibly. Here are no constellations of golden lamps depending by glittering chains from a mysterious vaulted ceiling, no arcades of alabaster, no sculptured marbles. The church is supported by two rows of pillars neatly carved in stone, but wretchedly proportioned. Over the high altar, where stands the revered image in the midst of a bright illumination, was stretched a canopy of flowered velvet. This drapery, richly fringed and tasselled, marks out the spot formerly occupied by the chamber of the

saint, and receives an amber light from a row of tall casement windows, the woodwork gleaming with burnished gold.

A great many broad English faces burst forth from amongst the crowd of profane vulgar at the portal of the church, and all their eyes were directed to their enthusiastic countryman, but he was not to be stared out of a decent countenance.

The ceremony was extremely pompous. A prelate of the first rank, with a considerable detachment of priests from the royal chapel, officiated to the sounds of lively jigs and ranting minuets, better calculated to set a parcel of water-drinkers a dancing in a pump-room than to direct the movements of a pontiff and his assistants.

After much indifferent music, vocal and instrumental, performed full gallop in the most rapid allegro, Frè Joaô Jacinto, a famous preacher, mounted the pulpit, lifted up hands and eyes, and poured forth a torrent of sounding phrases in honour of St. Anthony. What would I not give for such a voice?—it would almost have reached from Dan unto Beersheba.

The father has undoubtedly great powers of elocution, and none of that canting, nasal whine so common in the delivery of monkish sermons. He treated kings, tetrarchs, and conquerors, the heroes and sages of antiquity, with ineffable contempt; reduced their palaces and fortifications to dust, their armies to pismires, their imperial vestments to cobwebs, and impressed all his audience, except the heretical squinters at the door, with the most thorough conviction of St. Anthony's superiority over these objects of an erring and impious admiration.

"Happy," exclaimed the preacher, "were those Gothic ages, falsely called ages of barbarism and ignorance, when the hearts of men, uncorrupted by the delusive beverage of philosophy, were open to the words of truth falling like honey from the mouths of saints and confessors, such words as distilled from the lips of Anthony, yet a suckling hanging at the breast in this very spot. It was here the spirit of the Most High descended upon him, here that he conceived the sublime intention of penetrating into the most turbulent parts of Europe, setting the inclemency of seasons and the malice of men at defiance, and sprinkling amongst lawless nations the seeds of grace and repentance. There, my brethren, is the door out of which he issued. Do you not see him in the

habit of a Menino de Coro, smiling with all the graces of innocence, and dispensing with his infant hands to a group of squalid children the portion of nourishment he has just received from his mother?

"But Anthony, from the first dawn of his existence, lived for others, and not for himself: he forewent even the luxury of meditation, and instead of retiring into a peaceful cell, rushed into the world, helpless and unprotected, lifting high the banner of the Cross amidst perils and uproar, appeasing wars, settling differences both public and domestic, exhorting at the risk of his life ruffians and plunderers to make restitution, and armed misers, guarding their coffers with bloody swords, to open their hearts and their hands to the distresses of the widow and the fatherless.

"Anthony ever sighed after the crown of martyrdom, and had long entertained an ardent desire of passing over into Morocco, and exposing himself to the fury of its bigoted and cruel sovereign; but the commands of his superior retain him on the point of embarkation; he makes a sacrifice of even this most laudable and glorious ambition; he traverses Spain, repairs to Assisi, embraces the rigid order of the great St Francis, and continues to his last hour administering consolation to the dejected, fortifying their hopes of heaven, and confirming the faith of such as were wavering or deluded by a succession of prodigies. The dead are raised, the sick are healed, the sea is calmed by a glance of St. Anthony; even the lowest ranks of the creation are attracted by eloquence more than human, and give marks of sensibility. Fish swim in shoals to hear the word of the Lord; and to convince the obdurate and those accursed, whose hearts the false reasoning of the world had hardened, mules and animals the most perversely obstinate humble themselves to the earth when Anthony holds forth the Sacrament, and acknowledge the presence of the Divinity."

The sermon ended, fiddling began anew with redoubled vigour, and I, disgusted with such unseasonable levity, retired home in dudgeon. This little cloud of peevishness was soon dissipated by the cheering presence of the good Prior of Avis, than whom there exists not, perhaps, in this world a more benign, evangelical character; one who gives glory to God with less ostentation, or bears a more unaffected goodwill

towards men. This excellent prelate had been passing his morning, not in attending pompous ceremonies, but in consoling the sick and relieving the indigent; climbing up to their miserable chambers to afford assistance in the name of the saint whose festival was celebrating, and whose fame, for every charitable beneficent act, had been handed down by the inhabitants of Lisbon from father to child, through a long series of generations.

Our discourse was not of a nature to incline me to relish pomps and vanities. I waived seeing the procession which was expected to pass through the principal streets of the city, and, accompanied by my reverend friend, enjoyed the serenity of the evening on the shore of Belem. We stopped as we passed by the Marialva palace, and took up Don Pedro and his nursing father, the old Abade, who proposed a visit to the Carthusian convent of Cachiez.

In about half-an-hour we were set down before the church, which fronts the royal gardens, and were ushered into a solemn, silent quadrangle. Several spectres of the order were gliding about the cloisters, which branch off from this court. In the middle is a marble fountain, shaded by pyramids of clipped box; around are seven or eight small chapels: one of which contains a coloured image of the Saviour in the last dreadful agonies of His passion, covered with livid bruises and corrupted gore.

Whilst we were examining this too faithful effigy, some of the monks, by leave of their superior, gathered around us; one of them, a tall interesting figure, attracted my attention by the deep melancholy which sat upon his features. Upon inquiry, I learned he was only two-and-twenty years of age, of illustrious parentage, and lively talents; but the immediate cause of his having sought these mansions of stillness and mortification, the Grand Prior seemed loth to communicate.

I could not help observing, as this young victim stood before me, and I contemplated the evening light thrown on the arcades of the quadrangle, how many setting suns he was likely to behold wasting their gleams upon these walls, and what a wearisome succession of years he had in all probability devoted himself to consume within their precincts. The eyes of the good prior filled with tears, Verdeil shuddered, and the Abade, forgetting the superstitious part he generally acts in

religious places, exclaimed loudly against the toleration of human sacrifices, and the folly of permitting those to renounce the world, whose youth incapacitates them from making a due estimate of its sorrows or advantages. As for Don Pedro, his serious disposition received additional gloom from the objects with which we were environed.

The chill gust that blew from an arched hall where the fathers are interred, and whose pavement returned a hollow sound as we walked over it, struck him with horror. It was the first time of his entering a Carthusian convent, and, to my surprise, he appeared ignorant of the severities of the order.

The sun set before we regained our carriage, and our conversation the whole way home partook of the impression which the scenery we had been contemplating inspired.

LETTER XIV.

June 14th, 1787.—It was my lot this afternoon to receive a curious succession of visitors. First came Pombal, who looked worn down with gay living and late hours; but there is an ease and fashion in his address not common in this country. Though he possesses one of the largest landed estates in the kingdom (about one hundred and twenty thousand crowns a-year), he wished me to understand that his dread father, the scourge and terror of the noblest houses in Portugal, the sole dispenser during so many years of the royal treasure, died, notwithstanding, in distressed circumstances, loaded with debts contracted in supporting the dignity of his post.

The next who did me the honour of a visit was the Judge Conservator of the English factory, Joaô Telles, a relation, legitimate or illegitimate (I know not exactly which), of the Penalvas. This man, who has risen to one of the highest posts of the law by the sole strength of his abilities, has a nervous, original style of expression, which put me in mind of Lord Thurlow; but to all this vigour of character and diction, he joins the pliability and subtleness of a serpent; and those he cannot take by storm, he is sure of overcoming by every soothing art of flattery and insinuation.

As soon as he was departed, entered a pair of monks with a basket of sweetmeats in cut paper, from a good lady abbess, beseeching me to portion out two sweet virgins as God's spouses in some neighbouring monastery.

They were scarcely dismissed, before Father Theodore d'Almeida and another of his brethren were ushered in. The whites of their eyes alone were visible, nor could Whitfield himself, the original Doctor Squintum of Foote, have squinted more scientifically.

I was all attention to Father Theodore's seraphic discourse; so excellent an opportunity of hearing a first-rate specimen of hypocritical cant was not to be neglected. No sooner had the fathers been conducted to the stairs-head with due ceremony, than Monsenhor Aguilar, one of the prelates of the Patriarchal Cathedral, was announced. He confirmed me in the opinion I entertained of Father Theodore. No person can accuse Aguilar of being a hypocrite. He lays himself but too much open, and treats the church from which he derives a handsome maintenance, not as a patroness, but as a humble companion, the constant butt and object of his sarcasms. In Portugal, even in the year 1787, such conduct is madness, and I fear will expose him one day or other to severe persecution.

We were roused from a peaceful dish of tea by a loud hubbub in the street, and running to the balcony, found a beastly mob of old hags, children, and ragamuffins assembled, headed by half-a-dozen drummers, and as many negroes in scarlet jackets, blowing French-horns with unusual vehemence, and pointing them directly at the house. I was wondering at this Jericho fashion of besieging one's door, and drawing back to avoid being singed by a rocket which whizzed along within an inch of my nose, when one of the servants entered with a crucifix on a silver salver, and a mighty kind message from the nuns of the Convent of the Sacrament, who had sent their musicians with timbrels and fireworks, to invite us to some grand doings at their convent, in honour of the Festival of the Heart of Jesus. Really, these church parties begin to lose in my eyes great part of the charm which novelty gave them. I have had pretty nearly my fill of motets, and Kyrie eleisons, and incense, and sweetmeats, and sermons.

That heretic Verdeil, who would almost as soon be in hell at once as in such a cloying heaven, would not let me rest till

I went with him to the theatre in the Rua d'os Condes, in order to dissipate by a little profane air the fumes of so much holiness. The play afforded me more disgust than amusement; the theatre is low and narrow, and the actors, for there are no actresses, below criticism. Her Majesty's absolute commands having swept females off the stage, their parts are acted by calvish young fellows. Judge what a pleasing effect this metamorphosis must produce, especially in the dancers, where one sees a stout shepherdess in virgin white, with a soft blue beard, and a prominent collar-bone, clenching a nosegay in a fist that would almost have knocked down Goliath, and a train of milk-maids attending her enormous footsteps, tossing their petticoats over their heads at every step. Such sprawling, jerking, and ogling I never saw before, and hope never to see again.

We were heartily sick of the performance before it was half finished, and the night being serene and pleasant, were tempted to take a ramble in the Great Square, which received a faint gleam from the lights in the apartments of the palace, every window being thrown open to catch the breeze. The Archbishop Confessor displayed his goodly person at one of the balconies; from a clown, this now most important personage became a common soldier, from a common soldier a corporal, from a corporal a monk, in which station he gave so many proofs of toleration and good-humour, that Pombal, who happened to stumble upon him by one of those chances which set all calculation at defiance, judged him sufficiently shrewd, jovial, and ignorant, to make a very harmless and comfortable confessor to her Majesty, then Princess of Brazil: since her accession to the throne, he is become Archbishop *in partibus*, Grand Inquisitor, and the first spring in the present government of Portugal. I never saw a sturdier fellow. He seems to anoint himself with the oil of gladness, to laugh and grow fat in spite of the critical situation of affairs in this kingdom, and the just fears all its true patriots entertain of seeing it once more elapse into a Spanish province.

At a window immediately over his right reverence's shining forehead, we spied out the Lacerdas, two handsome sisters, maids of honour to the Queen, waving their hands to us very invitingly. This was encouragement enough for us to run up a vast many flights of stairs to their apartment, which was crowded with nephews and nieces and cousins clustering round

two very elegant young women, who, accompanied by their singing-master, a little square friar, with greenish eyes, were warbling Brazilian modinhas.

Those who have never heard this original sort of music, must and will remain ignorant of the most bewitching melodies that ever existed since the days of the Sybarites. They consist of languid interrupted measures, as if the breath was gone with excess of rapture, and the soul panting to meet the kindred soul of some beloved object. With a childish carelessness they steal into the heart, before it has time to arm itself against their enervating influence; you fancy you are swallowing milk, and are admitting the poison of voluptuousness into the closest recesses of your existence. At least, such beings as feel the power of harmonious sounds are doing so; I won't answer for hard-eared, phlegmatic northern animals.

An hour or two passed away almost imperceptibly in the pleasing delirium these syren notes inspired, and it was not without regret I saw the company disperse and the spell dissolve. The ladies of the apartment having received a summons to attend her Majesty's supper, curtsied us off very gracefully, and vanished.

In our way home we met the Sacrament, enveloped in a glare of light, marching in state to pay some sick person a farewell visit; and that hopeful young nobleman, the Conde de Villa Nova,* preceding the canopy in a scarlet mantle, and tinkling a silver bell. He is always in close attendance upon the Host, and passes the flower of his days in this singular species of danglement. No lover was ever more jealous of his mistress than this ingenuous youth of his bell. He cannot endure any other person should give it vibration. The parish officers of the extensive and populous district in which his palace is situated, from respect to his birth and opulence, indulge him in this caprice, and indeed a more perseverant bell-bearer they could not have chosen. At all hours and in all weathers he is ready to perform this holy office. In the dead of the night, or in the most intense heat of the day, out he issues and down he dives, or up he climbs, to any dungeon or garret where spiritual assistance of this nature is demanded.

It has been again and again observed, that there is no

* Since Marquis of Abrantes.

accounting for fancies; every person has his own, which he follows to the best of his means and abilities. The old Marialva's delights are centred between his two silver recipiendaries; the Marquis his son in dancing attendance with the Queen; and Villa Nova, in announcing with his bell to all true believers the approach of celestial majesty. The present rage of the scribbler of all these extravagances is modinhas, and under its prevalence he feels half-tempted to set sail for the Brazils, the native land of these enchanting compositions, to live in tents, such as the Chevalier de Parny describes in his agreeable little voyage; and swing in hammocks, or glide over smooth mats, surrounded by bands of youthful minstrels, diffusing at every step the perfume of jasmine and roses.

LETTER XV.

June 29th, 1787.—The bright sunshine which has lately been our portion, glorious as it is, begins to tire me. Twenty times a day I cannot help wishing myself extended at full length upon the fresh herbage of some shady English valley, where fairies gambol in the twilights of midsummer, whispering in the ears of their sleeping favourites the good or evil fortunes which await them. It is too hot for these oracular little elvish beings in Portugal; one must not here expect their inspirations: but would to Heaven some revelation of this or any other nature had warned me off in time, from the blinding dust and excessive sultriness of Lisbon and its neighbourhood. How silly, when one is well and cool, to gad abroad, in the vain hope of making what is really best, better. Depend upon it, there is more vernal delight and joy in our green hills and copses, than in all these stunted olive-fields and sunburnt promontories.

We have a homely saying, that what is poison to one man is meat to another, and true enough; for these days and nights of glowing temperature, which oppress me beyond endurance, are the delight and boast of the inhabitants of this capital. The heat seems not only to have new-venomed the stings of the fleas and the musquitoes, but to have drawn out, the whole night long, all the human ephemera of Lisbon. They frisk, and dance, and tinkle their guitars from sunset to sunrise. The dogs, too, keep yelping and howling without intermission;

and what with the bellowing of litanies by parochial processions, the whizzing of fireworks, which devotees are perpetually letting off in honour of some member or other of the celestial hierarchy, and the squabbles of bullying rake-hells, who scour the streets in search of adventures, there is no getting a wink of sleep, even if the heat would allow it.

As in those quiet nocturnal parties, where ingenuous youths rest their heads, not on the lap of earth, but on that of their mistresses, who are soothingly employed in delivering the jetty locks of their lovers from too abundant a population, I have nothing to say against them, nor am I much disturbed by the dashing sound of a few downfalls * from the windows; but these dog-howlings exceed every annoyance of the kind I ever endured, and give no slight foretaste of the infernal regions.

Nothing but amusement and racket being thought of here at this season (when to celebrate St. Peter's festival with all the noise and extravagance in your power, is not more a profane inclination than a pious duty), that simpleton, the Conde de Villa Novo, opened his garden last night to the nob and mob-ility of Lisbon. There was a dull illumination of paper lanterns, and a sort of pavilion awkwardly constructed for dancing, beneath which the prettiest French and English mantua-makers, milliners, and abigails of the metropolis, figured away in cotillons with the Duke of Cadaval and some other young men of the first distinction, who, like many as hopeful in our own capital, are never at their ease but in low company. Two or three of my servants accompanied my tailor to the fête, and returned enraptured with the affable pleasing manners of the foreign milliners and native nobility.

I should have been most happy to remain at home, in the shade of my green blinds, giving ear, through mere laziness, to any nonsense that anybody chose to say to me; but we had been long engaged to dine with Don Diego de Noronha, at the Anjeja palace.

When we arrived at our destination, we found the heir of

* Writers of travels are sadly given to exaggeration. The author of the "Tableau du Lisbonne" writes, "Il est dix heures, une foule de P. de Ch. s'avance," etc. From such an account one would suppose the whole line of houses in motion. No such thing. At intervals, to be sure, some accidents of this sort, more or less, slily occur; but by no means in so general and evident a manner.

the family surrounded by priests and tutors, learning to look out at the window, the chief employment of Portuguese fidalgo life. Oh, what a precious collection of stories did I hear at this attic banquet! There happened to be amongst the company a young oaf of a priest, from I forget what university (I hope not Coimbra), who kept on during the whole dinner favouring us with marvellous narrations, such as the late Queen's pounding a pearl of inestimable value, to swallow in medical potions; and that one of the nuns of the Convent of the Sacrament, having intrigued with old Beelzebub *in propria persona*, had been sent to the Inquisition, and the window through which his infernal majesty had entered upon this gallant exploit, walled up and painted over with red crosses. The same precautionary decoration, continued he, has been bestowed upon every opening in the façade, so that no demon, however sharp-set, can get in again. He would fain also have made us believe, that a woman very fair and plump to the eye, with an overflowing breast of milk, who took in sucklings to nurse cheaper than anybody else, regularly made away with them, and was now in the dungeons of the holy office, accused of having minced up above a score of innocents!

Heaven forbid I should detail any further particulars of our table-talk; if I did, you would be finely surfeited.

After dinner the company dispersed, some to their couches, some to hear a sonata on the dulcimer, accompanied on the jew's harp by a couple of dwarfs; the heir-apparent to his beloved window; and Verdeil and I to a convent of Savoyard nuns, at Belem, the coolest, cleanest retirement in the whole neighbourhood, and blessed into the bargain by the especial patronage and inspection of Father Theodore d'Almeida. His reverence, it seems, had been the principal instrument, under Providence, of transplanting these blessed sprouts of holiness from the Convent of the Visitation at Annecy to the glowing climate of Portugal.

As I had just received a sugary epistle from this paragon of piety, recommending his favourite establishment in several pages of ardent panegyric, he could do no less than come forth from his interior nest, and bid us welcome with a countenance arrayed in the sweetest smiles, though I dare say he wished us at old scratch for our intrusion.

"Poor things," said he, speaking of the chickens under

education in this coop, "we do all we can to improve their tender minds and their guileless tongues in foreign languages. Sister Theresa has an admirable knack for teaching arithmetic; our venerable mother is remarkably well-bottomed in grammar, and Sister Francisca Salesia, whom I had the happiness to bring over from Lyons, is not only a most pure and persuasive moralist, but is acknowledged to be one of the first needles in Christendom,—so we do tolerably well in embroidery. In music we are no great proficients. We allow of no modinhas, no opera airs; a plain hymn is all you must expect here; in short, we are ill-fitted to receive such distinguished visitors, and have nothing the world would call interesting to recommend us; but then, I, their unworthy confessor, must allow that such sweet, clean consciences as I meet with in this asylum are treasures beyond all that the Indies can furnish."

Both Verdeil and myself, conscious of our own extreme unworthiness, were quite abashed by this sublime declamation, poured forth with hands crossed on the bosom, and eyes turned up to the ceiling, like some images one has seen of St. Ignatius or St. Francis Xavier.

It was a minute at least before his reverence relaxed from this attitude, and, drawing a curtain, condescended to admit us into a spacious parlour, delightfully cool, perfumed with jasmine, and filled with little Brazilian doves, parroquets, and canary birds. Such a cooing and chirping was never heard in greater perfection, except in Mahomet's paradise; nor were the houries wanting, for in a deep recess, behind a tolerably wide lattice, sat a row of the loveliest young creatures I ever beheld. A daughter of my friend Don Josè de Brito was amongst the number, and her eyes, of the most bewitching softness, seemed to acquire new fascination in this mysterious sort of twilight, beaming from behind a double grating of iron.

Every now and then the birds, not in the least intimidated by the predatory glances of Father Theodore, violated the sanctuary, and pitched upon ivory necks, and were received with ten thousand endearments by the angels of this little sequestered heaven, which looked so refreshing, and formed by its sacred calm so inviting a contrast to the turbulent world without, and its glaring atmosphere, that I could not resist exclaiming, "Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly through those bars and be at rest!"

I need not tell you we passed half-an-hour most delightfully in talking of music, gardens, roses, and devotion, with the meninas, and had almost forgotten we were engaged to hear the Scarlati sing. Her father, an old captain of horse, of Italian extraction, lives not far from the Convent of the Visitation, so we had not much time during our transit to experience the woeful difference between the cool parlour of the nuns and the suffocating exterior air.

A numerous group of the young ladies' kindred stood ready at the street-door, with all that hospitable courtesy for which the Portuguese are so remarkably distinguished, to usher the strangers upstairs into a gallery hung with arras and sconces, not unlike the great room of an Italian inn, once the palace of a nobleman. To keep up these post-house ideas, we scented a strong effluvia of the stable, and heard certain stampings and neighings, as if a party of hounnyms had arrived to partake of the concert.

Many strange, aboriginal figures of both sexes were assembled, an uncouth collection enough, I am apt to conjecture; however, I soon ceased giving them any notice. The young lady of the house charmed me at first sight by her graceful, modest manner; but when she sang some airs, composed by the famous Perez, I was not less delighted than surprised. Her voice modulates with unaffected carelessness into the most pathetic tones.* Though she has adopted the masterly and scientific style of Ferracuti, one of the first singers in the Queen's service, she gives a simplicity of expression to the most difficult passages, that makes them appear the effusions of a young romantic girl warbling to herself in the secret recesses of a forest.

I sat in a dark corner, unconscious of everything that passed

* These affecting tones seem to have made a lasting impression indeed upon the heart of a young man, one of the principal clerks in the Secretary of State's office: he was all admiration, all ardour; his divinity all indifference. After a long period of unavailing courtship, the poor lover, driven to absolute despair, made a donation of all he was worth in the world to the object of his adoration, and threw himself into the Tagus. Providentially he was fished out and brought home, pale and almost inanimate. Such a spectacle, accompanied by so vivid a proof of unlimited passion, had its effect. The lady relented; they were united, and are as happy at this day, I believe, as the recollection of so narrow an escape, and its cause, can make them.

in the apartment, of the singular figures that entered, or those that went away; the starings, whisperings, and fan-flirtings of the assembly were lost upon me: I could not utter a syllable, and was vexed when an arbitrary old aunt insisted upon no more singing, and proposed a faro table and a dance.

Most eagerly did I wish all the kindred and their friends petrified for the time being by some obliging necromancer, and would have done anything, short of engaging my own dear self to the devil, to have obtained an uninterrupted audience of the syren till morning.

LETTER XVI.

June 30th, 1787.— . . . We sallied out after dinner to pay visits. Never did I behold such cursed ups-and-downs, such shelving descents and sudden rises, as occur at every step one takes in going about Lisbon. I thought myself fifty times on the point of being overturned into the Tagus, or tumbled into sandy ditches, among rotten shoes, dead cats, and negro beldames, who retire into such dens and burrows for the purpose of telling fortunes and selling charms for the ague.

The Inquisition too often lays hold of these wretched sibyls, and works them confoundedly. I saw one dragging into light as I passed by the ruins of a palace thrown down by the earthquake. Whether a familiar of the Inquisition was griping her in his clutches, or whether she was being taken to account by some disappointed votary, I will not pretend to answer. Be that as it may, I was happy to be driven out of sight of this hideous object, whose contortions and howlings were truly horrible.

The more one is acquainted with Lisbon, the less it answers the expectations raised by its magnificent appearance from the river. Could a traveller be suddenly transported without preparation or prejudice to many parts of this city, he would reasonably conclude himself traversing a succession of villages awkwardly tacked together, and overpowered by massive convents. The churches in general are in a woeful taste of architecture, the taste of Borromini, with crinkled pediments, furbelowed cornices and turrets, somewhat in the style of old-fashioned French clock-cases, such as Boucher designed with

many a scrawl and flourish to adorn the apartments of Madame de Pompadour.

We traversed the city this evening in all its extent in our way to the Duke d'Alafoens's villa, and gave vast numbers of her most faithful Majesty's subjects an opportunity of staring at the height of the coach-box, the short jacket of the postillion, and other Anglicisms of the equipage. The Duke had been summoned to a council of state; but we found the Marquis of Marialva, who went with us round the apartments of the villa, which have nothing remarkable except one or two large saloons of excellent and striking proportions.

He afterwards proposed accompanying us about half-a-mile farther to the quinta of Marvilla, which belongs to his father. This spot has great picturesque beauties. The trees are old and fantastic, bending over ruined fountains and mutilated statues of heroes in armour, variegated by the lapse of years with innumerable tints of purple, green, and yellow. In the centre of almost impenetrable thickets of bay and myrtle, rise strange pyramids of rock-work surrounded by marble lions, that have a magic, symbolical appearance. M—— has feeling enough to respect these uncouth monuments of an age when his ancestors performed so many heroic achievements, and readily promised me never to sacrifice them, and the venerable shades in which they are embowered, to the pert, gaudy taste of modern Portuguese gardening.

We walked part of the way home by the serene light of the full moon rising from behind the mountains on the opposite shore of the Tagus, at this extremity of the metropolis above nine miles broad. Lisbon, which appeared to me so uninteresting a few hours ago, assumed a very different aspect by these soft gleams. The flights of steps, terraces, chapels, and porticoes of several convents and palaces on the brink of the river, shone forth like edifices of white marble, whilst the rough cliffs and miserable sheds rising above them were lost in dark shadows. The great square through which we passed was filled with idlers of all sorts and sexes, staring up at the illuminated windows of the palace in hopes of catching a glimpse of her Majesty, the Prince, the Infantas, the Confessor, or Maids of Honour, whisking about from one apartment to the other, and giving ample scope to amusing conjectures. I am told the Confessor, though somewhat advanced in his

career, is far from being insensible to the allurements of beauty, and pursues the young nymphs of the palace from window to window with juvenile alacrity.

It was nine before we got home, and I had not been long reposing myself after my walk, and arranging some plants I had gathered in the thickets of Marvilla, before three distinct ringings of the bell at my door announced the arrival of some distinguished personage; nor was I disappointed, for in came the old Marquis of Penalva and his son, who, till a year ago, when the Queen granted him the same title as his father, was called Conde de Tarouca.

You must have heard frequently of that name. A grandfather of the old Marquis rendered it very illustrious by several important and successful embassies: the splendid entertainments he gave at the Congress of Utrecht are amply described in Madame du Noyers' and several other books of memoirs.

The Penalvas brought this evening in their suite a famous Jesuit, Padre Duarte, whom Pombal thought of sufficient consequence to be imprisoned for eighteen years, and a tall, knock-kneed, rhubarb-faced physician, in a gorgeous suit of glistening satin, one of the most ungainly, conceited professors of the art of murdering I ever met with. Between the Jesuit and the doctor I had enough to do to keep my temper or countenance. They prated incessantly, pretended to have the most implicit admiration for everything that came from England, either in the way of furniture or poetry, and confounding dates, names, and subjects in one strange jumble, asked whether Sir Peter Lely was not the actual President of our Royal Academy, and launched forth into a warm encomium of my countryman Hans Holbein. I begged leave to assure these complaisant sages, that the last-mentioned artist was born at Basle, and that Sir Peter Lely had been dead a century. They stared a little at this information, but continued, nevertheless, in full song, playing off a sounding peal of compliments upon our national proficiency in painting, watchmaking, the stocking-manufactory, etc., when General Forbes came in and made a diversion in my favour. We had some conversation upon the present state of Portugal, and the risks it runs of being swallowed up by the negotiations, not by the arms of Spain, ere many years are elapsed. . . .

Our discourse was interrupted by the arrival of a fiddler, a priest, and an Italian musician, humble servants and toad-eaters to my illustrious guests. They fell a-thumping my poor pianoforte, and playing sonatas whether I would or not. You are aware I am no great friend to sonatas, and that certain chromatic, squeaking tones of a fiddle, when the performer turns up the whites of his eyes, waggles a greasy chin, and affects ecstasies, set my teeth on edge. The griping countenance of the doctor was enough to produce that effect already, without the assistance of his fellow-parasites, the priest and musician. Padre Duarte seemed to like them no better than myself; General Forbes had wisely withdrawn; and the old Marquis, inspired by a pathetic adagio, glided suddenly across the room in a step which I took for the beginning of a ballet heroique, but which turned out a minuet in the Portuguese style, with all its kicks and flourishes, in which Miss S——, who had come in to tea, was persuaded to join much against her inclination. It was no sooner ended, than the doctor displayed his rueful length of person in such a twitching angular minuet, as I want words to describe; so, between the sister arts of music and dancing, I passed a delectable evening. This set sha'n't catch me at home again in a hurry.

LETTER XVII.

July 2nd, 1787.—I was awakened in the night by a horrid cry of dogs; not that infernal pack which Dryden tells us in his divine tale of "Theodore and Honoria" went regularly a-ghost-hunting every Friday, howled half so dreadfully; Lisbon is more infested than any other capital I ever inhabited by herds of these half-famished animals, making themselves of use and importance by ridding the streets of some part, at least, of their unsavoury encumbrances.

Verdeil, who could not sleep any more than myself, on account of a furious and long-protracted battle between two parties of these hell-hounds, persuaded me to rise with the sun, and proceed on horseback along the shore of Belem, which appeared in all its morning glory; the sky diversified by streaming clouds of purple edged with gold, and the sea by

innumerable vessels of different sizes shooting along in various directions, whilst the waves at the entrance of the harbour were in violent agitation, all froth and foam.

To vary our excursion a little, we struck out of the common track, and visited the convent of San Josè di Ribamar. The building is irregular and picturesque, rising from a craggy eminence, and backed by a thicket of elm, bay, and arbor judæ. We were shown by simple, smiling friars into a small court with cloisters, supported by low Tuscan columns. A fountain playing in the middle, and sprinkling a profusion of flowers, gave an Oriental air to this little court that pleased me exceedingly. The monks seem sensible of its merits, for they keep it tolerably clean, which is more than I will say for their garden. Bindweed and dwarf aloes almost prevented our crossing it in our way to the thicket: a delicious retreat, the refuge and comfort of half the birds in the country. Thanks to monkish laziness, the underwood remains unclipped, and intrudes wherever it pleases upon the alleys, which hang over the sea, in a bold romantic manner.

The fathers would show me their flower-garden, and a very pleasant terrace it is; neatly paved with chequered tiles, and interspersed with knots of carnations, in a style as ancient, I should conjecture, as the dominion of the Moors in Portugal. Espaliers of citron and orange cover the walls, and have almost gotten the better of some glaring shell-work, with which a reverend father incrusted them ten or twelve years ago. Shining beads, china plates and saucers turned inside out, compose the chief ornaments of this decoration; I observed the same propensity to shell-work and broken china in a Mr. de Visme, whose quinta at Bemfica eclipses our Clapham and Islington villas in all the attractions of leaden statues, Chinese temples, serpentine rivers, and dusty hermitages.

We returned home before the heat grew quite intolerable, and just in time to go to a breakfast at the Marquis of Penalva's, to which we had been invited the day before yesterday. When once a Portuguese of the first class determines to admit a stranger into the penetralia of his family, he spares no pains to set off all he possesses to the most striking advantage, and offer it to his guest with the most liberal hospitality; you appear to command him, and he everything. Our reception, therefore, was most sumptuous and most cordial.

If we had wished for a concert, the best musicians of the royal chapel were in waiting to perform it; if to examine early editions of the classics or scarce Portuguese authors, the library was open, and the librarian ready to hand and explain to us any article that happened to attract our attention; if to see pictures, the walls of several apartments displayed an interesting collection, both of the Italian and Flemish schools; if conversation, almost every person of literary note in this capital, academicians and artists, were assembled. Supposing the rarest botanical specimens and flowers had been our peculiar taste, some of the most perfect I ever beheld were presented to us; and that nothing in any line might be wanting, the rich grated folding-doors of a chapel were expanded, and an altar, splendidly lighted up, seemed to invite those who felt spiritual calls to indulge themselves.

For my part, the sea-breezes having sharpened my temporal appetite, I sat down with great alacrity to breakfast. It was magnificent and well served. I could not help noticing the extreme fineness of the linen, curiously embroidered with arms and flowers, red on a white ground. Superb embossed gilt salvers supported plates of iced fruit, particularly scarlet strawberries, which are uncommon in Portugal, and filled the apartment with fragrance; the more grateful, as it excited, by the strong power of associated ideas, recollections of home and of England.

Much whispering and giggling was going forward in the cool shade of several mysterious chambers, which opened into the saloon where we were at table. These sounds proceeded from the ladies of the family, who, had they been natives of Bagdad or Constantinople, could hardly have remained in a more Asiatic state of seclusion. I was allowed, however, to make my bow to them in their harem itself, which, I was given to understand, I ought to look upon as a most flattering mark of distinction. Who should I find in the midst of the group of senhoras, and seated like them upon the ground *à la façon de Barbarie*, but the newly-consecrated and very young-looking Bishop of Algarve, whose small, black, sleek, schoolboyish head and sallow countenance, was overshadowed by an enormous pair of green spectacles. Truth obliges me to confess that the expression which beamed from the eyes under these formidable glasses, did not absolutely partake of the most

decent, mild, or apostolic character. In process of time, perhaps, he may acquire that varnish, without which the least holy intentions often miss their aim, the varnish of hypocrisy. I wonder he has not already attained a more conspicuous degree of perfection in this style, having studied under a complete *Tartuffe* and Jansenistical bigot as ever existed, one of the cock-birds of a nest of imaginary philosophers, who are working hard to undo what little good has been done in this country, and laying a mine of ten thousand intrigues to blow up, if they can but contrive it, all genuine sentiments of religion and morality.

The old Marquis of Penalva pressed us to stay dinner, which was set out in high order, in a pleasant, shady apartment. Verdeil could not resist the temptation; but I was fatigued with the howlings of the night, and the sultriness and bustle of the day, and went home to a quieter party with the Grand Prior and Don Pedro.

In the evening we drove to Marvilla, the neglected garden I have before mentioned, and which commands the broadest expanse of the Tagus, a prospect which recalled to my mind the lake of Geneva, and all that befell me on its banks. You may imagine, then, it tended much more to depress than exhilarate my spirits. I consented, however, to accompany the Grand Prior about the alleys and terraces of this romantic inclosure, the scene of his childhood, and of which he is peculiarly fond. The palace, courts, and fountains are almost in ruins, the parterres of myrtle have shot up into wild bushes covered with blossoms, and the statues are half concealed by jasmine.

Here is a small theatre for operas, and a chapel, not unlike a mosque in shape, and arabesque ornaments, darkly shadowed by Spanish banners, the trophies of the battle of Elvas, gained by an ancestor of the Marialvas.

A long bower of vines, supported by marble pillars, leads from the palace to the chapel. There is something majestic in this verdant gallery, and the glow of sunset piercing its foliage, lighted up the wan features of several superannuated servants of the family, who crawled out of their decayed chambers and threw themselves on their knees before the Grand Prior and Don Pedro.

We wandered about this forlorn, abandoned garden, whose

stillness equalled that of a Carthusian convent, till dusk, when a refreshing wind having risen, waved the cypresses and scattered the white jasmine flowers over the parterres of myrtle in clouds like snow. Don Pedro filled the carriage with flowery sprays pulled from mutilated statues, and we were all half intoxicated before we reached my habitation with the delicious but overcoming perfume.

LETTER XVIII.

July 9th, 1787.—I was at the Marialva palace by nine, and set off from thence with the Marquis for Cintra. Having the command of the Queen's stables, in which are four thousand mules and two thousand horses, he orders as many relays as he pleases, and we changed mules four times in the space of an hour.

A few minutes after ten we were landed at Ramalhaô, a villa, under the pyramidical rocks of Cintra, Signor S. Arriaga was so kind as to lend me a month or two ago, and which I have not had time to visit till to-day. The suite of apartments are spacious and airy, and the views they command of sea and arid country boundless; but unless the heat becomes more violent, I shall be cooler than I wish in them, as they contain not a chimney except in the kitchen.

I found the garden in excellent order, and flourishing crops of vegetables springing up between rows of orange and citron. Such is the power of the climate, that the gardenias and Cape plants I brought with me from England, mere stumps, are covered with beautiful blossoms. The curled mallows, and some varieties of Indian-corn, sown by my English gardener, have shot up to a strange elevation, and begin already to form shady avenues and fairy forests, where children might play in perfection at landscape-gardening.

After I had passed half-an-hour in looking about me, the Marquis and I got into our chair and drove to his own villa; a new creation, which has cost him a great many thousand pounds sterling. Five years ago it was a wild hill bestrewn with flints and rocky fragments. At present you find a gay pavilion designed by Pillement, and elegantly decorated; a parterre with statues and fountains; thick alleys of laurel, bay,

and laurustine; cascades, arbours, clipped box-trees, and every ornament the Portuguese taste in gardening renders desirable.

We dined at a clean snug inn, situated towards the middle of the village of Cintra. The Queen has lately bestowed this house and a large tract of ground adjoining it upon the Marquis. From its windows and loggias you look down deep ravines and bold slopes of woods and copses, variegated with mossy stones and ancient decayed chestnuts.

As soon as the sun grew low we went to Collares, and walked on a terrace belonging to M. la Roche, a French merchant, who has shown some glimmering of taste in the laying out of his villa. The groves of pine and chestnuts starting from the crevices of rock, and rising one above another to a considerable elevation, give Collares the air of an Alpine village. Innumerable rills, overhung by cork-trees and branching lemons, burst out of ruined walls by the wayside, and dash into marble basins. A favourite attendant of the late king's, who has a very large property in these environs, invited us with much civility and obsequiousness into his garden. I thought myself entering the orchards of Alcinous. The boughs literally bent under loads of fruit; the slightest shake strewed the ground with plums, oranges, and apricots.

This villa boasts a grand artificial cascade, with tritons and dolphins vomiting torrents of water; but I paid it not half the attention its proprietor expected, and retiring under the shade of the fruit-trees, feasted on the golden apples and purple plums that were rolling about me in such profusion. The Marquis, who shares with most of the Portuguese a remarkable predilection for flowers, filled his carriage with carnations and jasmine. I never saw plants more conspicuous for size and vigour than those which have the luck of being sown in this fortunate soil. The exposition likewise is singularly happy; screened by sloping hills, and defended from the sea-airs by several miles of thickets and orchards. I felt unwilling to quit a spot so favoured by Nature, and M—— flatters himself I shall be tempted to purchase it.

The wind became troublesome as we ascended the hill, crowned by the Marialva villa. The sky was clear and the sun set fiery. The distant convent of Mafra, glowing with ruddy light, looked like the enchanted palace of a giant, and the surrounding country bleak and barren as if the monster had

eaten it desolate. To repose ourselves a little after our rapid excursion, we entered the pavilion I told you just now Pillement had designed. It represents a bower of fantastic Indian trees mingling their branches, and discovering between them peeps of a summer sky. From the mouth of a flying dragon depends a magnificent lustre for fifty lights, hung with festoons of brilliant glass, that twinkle like strings of diamonds.

We loitered in this saloon till it was pitch-dark. The pages riding full speed before us with flaming torches, and the wind driving back sparks and smoke full in our faces, I was stunned and bewildered, and experienced, perhaps, the sensations of a novice in sorcery, mounted for the first time behind a witch on a broomstick. In less than an hour we had rattled over twelve miles of rough, disjoined pavement, going up and down the steepest hills in a convulsive gallop, so that I expected every instant to be thrown flat on my nose; but, happily, the mules were picked from perhaps a hundred, and never stumbled. I found the air on the heights above the Ajueda very keen and piercing.

It sounds strange to be complaining of cold at Lisbon on the ninth of July.

LETTER XIX.

July 24th, 1787.—There exists, I am convinced, a decided sympathy between toads and witch-like old women. Mother Morgan * descended this morning, not into the infernal regions, but into the cellar, and immediately five or six spanking reptiles of this mysterious species waddled around her. She rewarded the confidence the poor things placed in her rather scurvily, and laid three of the fattest sprawling. I saw them lying breathless in the court as I got on horseback; the largest measured seven inches in diameter. Portuguese toads may be more distinguished for size, but are not half so amiably speckled as those we have the happiness to harbour in England.

I was some time hesitating which way I should turn my horse's steps, whether to the Pedra d'os Ovos, or on the other side of the rock to the Peninha, a cell belonging to the Hieronimites, and dependent upon their principal eyry, Nossa

* An old English housekeeper.

Senhora da Penha. Marialva, whom I met with all his train of equerries and picadors coming forth from his villa, decided me not to take a clambering ride, but to accompany him to the palace, the interior of which I had not yet visited.

The Alhambra itself is scarcely more morisco in point of architecture than this confused pile, which seems to grow out of the summit of a rocky eminence, and is broken into a variety of picturesque recesses and projections. It is a thousand pities that they have whitened its venerable walls, stopped up a range of bold arcades, and sliced out one end of the great hall into two or three mean apartments like the dressing-rooms of a theatre. From the windows, which are all in a fantastic Oriental style, crinkled and crankled, and supported by twisted pillars of smooth marble, striking romantic views of the cliffs and village of Cintra are commanded. Several irregular courts and loggias, formed by the angles of square towers, are enlivened by fountains of marble and gilt bronze, continually pouring forth abundant streams of the purest water.

A sort of reservoir, almost long enough to be styled a canal, is continued the whole length of the great hall, and serves as a paradise for shoals of the largest and most brilliant gold and silver fish I ever set eyes upon. The murmur of the jets-d'eau which rise from this canal, the ripple of the water undulating against steps and slabs of polished marble, the glancing and gleaming of the fish, and the striking contrast of light and shade produced by the intricate labyrinth of arches and columns, combine altogether to form a scene of enchantment such as we sometimes dream of, but hardly suppose is ever realized. There is a sobriety in the hues of the marble, a mysteriousness in the dark recesses seen in perspective, and a solemnity in the deep colour, approaching to blackness, of the water in that part of the reservoir which is overshadowed by lofty buildings, I cannot help thinking superior to all the flutter and glitter of the most famous Moorish edifices at Granada or Seville.

The flat summit of one of the loftiest terraces, not less than one hundred and fifty feet from the ground, is laid out as a neat parterre, which is spread like an embroidered carpet before the entrance of a huge square tower, almost entirely occupied by a hall incrusted with glistening tiles, and crowned by a most singularly shaped dome. Amidst the scrolls of arabesque

foliage which adorn it, appear the arms of the principal Portuguese nobility. The achievement of the unfortunate house of Tavora is blotted out, and the panel it occupied left bare.

We had climbed up to this terrace and tower by one of those steep, cork-screw staircases, of which there are numbers in the palace, and which connect with vaulted passages in a secret and suspicious manner. The Marquis pointed out to me the Mosaic pavement of a small chamber, fretted and worn away in several places by the steps of Alphonso the Sixth, who was confined to this narrow space a long series of years.

Descending from it, we looked into the chapel, not less singular in form and construction than the rest of the edifice. The low flat cupola, as well as the intersections of the arches, are much in the style of a mosque; but the barbaric profusion of gold, and still more barbaric paintings with which every soffite and panel are covered, might almost be supposed the work of Cingalese or Hindostanee artists, and reminded me of those subterraneous pagodas where his Satanic Majesty receives homage under the form of Gumputy or of Boodh.

The original glare of all this strange scenery is greatly subdued by the smoke of lamps, which have been burning for ages before the altar: a mysterious pile of carved work and imagery, in perfect consonance, as to gloom and uncouthness, with every other object in the place. It was whilst kneeling before this very altar that the young, the ardent, the chivalrous Don Sebastian is said to have received a supernatural warning to renounce that fatal African expedition which cost him his crown and his life, and what an heroic mind holds in far higher estimation, that immortal fame which follows successful achievements.

A something I can hardly describe, an oppressive gloom, seemed to hang over this chapel, which remains very nearly, I should imagine, in the same style it was left by the ill-fated Sebastian. The want of a free circulation of air, and a heavy cloud of incense, affected the nerves of my head so disagreeably that I was glad to move on, and follow the Marquis into the rooms preparing for the Queen and the Infantas. These are airy and well ventilated; but instead of hanging them with rich arras, representing the adventures of knights and worthies, her Majesty's upholsterers are hard at work covering the stout

walls with bright silks and satins of the palest and most delicate colours. I saw no furniture worth notice, not a picture or a cabinet: our stay, therefore, as we had nothing to see, was not protracted.

As soon as the Marquis had given some orders, with which his royal mistress had charged him, we returned to Ramalhaô, where Horne and Guildermeester, the Dutch consul, were waiting our arrival, and squabbling about insurances, percentages, commissions, and other commercial speculations.

I have been persuading the Marquis to accompany me to-morrow to Guildermeester's: it is the old man's birthday, and he opens his new house with dancing and suppering. We shall have a pretty sample of the factory misses, clerks, and apprentices, some underlings of the *corps diplomatique*, and God knows how many thousand pounds weight of Dutch and Hambro' merchants.

LETTER XX.

July 25th, 1787.—Grand gala at Court, and the Marquis gone to attend it; for this blessed day not only gave birth to Guildermeester, but to the Princess of Brazil. We went to dine with the Marchioness. A band of regimental music, on their march to Guildermeester's, began playing in the court, and drew forth one of those curious swarms of all sexes, ages, and colours, which this beneficent family are so fond of harbouring. Donna Henriquetta was seated on the steps, which led up to the great pavilion, whispering to some of her favourite attendants, who, like the chorus in an ancient Greek tragedy, were continually giving their opinion of whatever was going forward.

Just as Don Pedro and I were preparing to set off together for the ball at the old consul's, we were agreeably surprised by the arrival of the Marquis, who had escaped from the palace much earlier than he expected. I carried him in my chaise to Horne's, where we drank tea on his terrace, which commands the most romantic view in Cintra; vast sweeps of varied foliage, banks with twisted roots, and trunks of enormous chestnuts, mingled with weeping-willows of the freshest verdure, and citrons clustered with fruit. Above this sylvan scene tower three shattered pinnacles of rock, the middle one diver-

sified by the turrets and walls of Nossa Senhora da Penha, a convent of Jeronimites, frequently concealed in clouds. I leaned against a cork-tree, which spreads its branches almost entirely over the veranda, enjoying the view, and staring idly at the grotesque figures, Dutch, English, and Portuguese, passing along to Guildermeester's; a series sufficiently diversified to have amused me for some time, had not M—— grown impatient and uneasy. His brother-in-law, S—— V——, to whom he has a mortal aversion, having made his appearance, the powers of light and darkness, if personified, could not exhibit a stronger contrast than these two personages; M—— looking all benignity, and S—— V—— all malevolence. Indeed, if one half of the atrocities* public report attributes to this notorious nobleman be true, I should not wonder at the blackness of revenge and tyranny being so deeply marked in every line of his countenance.

Moving off the first opportunity, we passed through dark and gloomy lanes, admirably calculated for such exploits as I have just alluded to, and were near being jerked into a ditch as we drove to the old consul's door. The space before this new building is in sad disorder. The house has little more than bare walls, and was not very splendidly lighted up.

As for the company, they turned out just what I expected. Madame G——, who is a woman of spirit and discernment, did the honours with the greatest ease, and paid her principal guests the most marked attentions. There is a something pointedly original in all her observations, which pleased me very much. She is not, however, of the merciful tribe, and joined forces with Verdeil (no foe to a little slashing conversation) in cutting up the factory. M—— handed her in to supper. This part of the entertainment was magnificent. There was a bright illumination, an immense profusion of plate, a striking breadth of table, every delicacy that could be procured, and a dessert-frame fifty or sixty feet in length, gleaming with burnished figures and vases of silver flowers. I felt no inclination to dance after supper; the music was not inspiring, and the company thrown into the utmost confusion by the mad freaks of a Frenchman, upon whom one of the principal ladies present is supposed for two or three years past to have

* For no light specimen of these atrocities, see Southey's "Letters from Spain and Portugal."

placed her affections. A *coup de soleil* and a quarrel with his ambassador, Monsieur de Bombelles, it seems had turned the poor fellow's brain: there was no preventing his rushing from room to room with the sputter and eccentricity of a firework, now abusing one person, now another, confessing publicly the universal kindness he had received from the lady above hinted at, and the many marks of tender affection a certain Miss W—— had bestowed on him. "Why," said he to the two heroines, who I am told are not upon the best terms imaginable, "should you squabble and scratch? You are both equally indulgent, and have both rendered me in your turns the happiest mortal in the universe."

Whilst the light of truth was shining upon the bystanders in this very singular manner, I leave you to imagine the awkward surprise of the worthy old husband, and the angry blushes of his spouse and her fair associate. I never beheld a more capital scene. In some of our pantomimes, if I recollect rightly, harlequin applies a touchstone to his adversaries, and by its magic influence draws truth from their mouths in spite of propriety or interest. The lawyer confesses having fingered a bribe, the soldier his flight in the day of battle, and the whining methodistical dowager her frequent recourse to the bottle of inspiration. This wondrous effect seems to have been here realized, and some malicious demon to have possessed the talkative Frenchman, and to have compelled him to disclose the mysteries to which he owes his subsistence. Amongst the harsh truths poured out by this flow of sincerity was a vehement apostrophe to the English canaille, as he styled them, upon their rank intolerance of all customs except their own, and their ten thousand starch uncharitable prejudices. Mrs. ——, become dauntless through despair, took up the cudgels in this cause most vigorously, compared the chief part of the company to a swarm of venomous insects, unworthy to crawl upon the hem of her really pure, though calumniated garments, and fit to be shaken off with a vengeance the first opportunity.

The Marquis, Don Pedro, and I enjoyed the scene so much that we stayed later than we intended.

LETTER XXI.

RAMALHAÔ, NEAR CINTRA, *August 26th*, 1787.

The Queen of Portugal's chapel is still the first in Europe; in point of vocal and instrumental excellence, no other establishment of the kind, the papal not excepted, can boast such an assemblage of admirable musicians. Wherever her Majesty moves they follow; when she goes a hawking to Salvaterra, or a health-hunting to the baths of the Caldas. Even in the midst of these wild rocks and mountains, she is surrounded by a bevy of delicate warblers, as plump as quails, and as gurgling and melodious as nightingales. The violins and violoncellos at her Majesty's beck are all of the first order, and in oboe and flute players her musical menagerie is unrivalled.

The Marquis of M——, as First Lord of the Bedchamber, Master of the Horse, and, as it were, hereditary prime favourite, enjoys a decided influence over this empire of sweet sounds; and having been so friendly as to impart a share of these musical blessings to me, I have been permitted to avail myself, whenever I please, of a selection from this wonderful band of performers. This very morning, to my shame be it recorded, I remained hour after hour in my newly-arranged pavilion, without reading a word, writing a line, or entering into any conversation. All my faculties were absorbed by the harmony of the wind instruments, stationed at a distance in a thicket of orange and bay trees. It was to no purpose that I tried several times to retire out of the sound—I was as often drawn back as I attempted to snatch myself away. Did I consult the health of my mind, I should dismiss these musicians; their plaintive affecting tones are sure to awaken in my bosom a long train of mournful recollections, and by the force of associated ideas to plunge me into a state of languor and gloom.

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My excellent friend, the Prior of Aviz, performed a real act of friendship, by breaking in almost by force upon my seclusion, and rousing me from my reveries. He insisted upon my accompanying him to the Archbishop's, where the rehearsal of a council to be held in the Queen's presence was going forward, and all the ministers with their assistant under-secretaries assembled. Such congregations are new to the good old

Confessor, who has been just pressed into the supreme direction, I might say control, of the cabinet, much against his will. He knows too well the value of ease and tranquillity not to regret so violent an inroad upon his usual habits of life. We found him, therefore, as might be expected, in a state of turmoil and irritation, flushed up to the very forehead with a ruddy tint, which was highly contrasted by his flowing white flannel garments. These garments he frequently shook and crumpled, and more than once did he strike with vehemence against his portly paunch, which, though he declared it had waited an hour longer than customary for its wonted replenishment, sounded by no means so hollow as an empty tub. The old saying, that "fat paunches make lean pates," could not, however, be applied to him. He was so gracious and confidential as to give me a summary of what had been represented to him from the different departments of state, with great perspicuity and acuteness.

Notwithstanding the interest this singular communication ought to have excited, I paid it not half the attention it deserved. The impression I had received in the morning, from the music of Haydn and Jomelli, still lingered about me. The Grand Prior, finding politics could not shake them off, consulted with his nephew, who happened to be just by in the Queen's apartment, and returned with a proposal, that as I had long expressed a wish to see Mafra, we should put this scheme in execution to-morrow. It was settled, therefore, that to-morrow we should set off.

LETTER XXII.

August 27th, 1787.—We got into the carriage at nine, in spite of the wind, which blew full in our faces. The distance from the villa I inhabit to this stupendous convent is about fourteen English miles, and the road, which by good luck has been lately mended, conducted across a parched, open country, thinly scattered with windmills and villages. The retrospect on the woody slopes and pointed rocks of Cintra is pleasant enough; but when you look forward, nothing can be more bleak or barren than the prospect. Thanks to relays of mules, we advanced, full speed, and in less than an hour and a quarter

found ourselves under a strong wall, which winds boldly across the hills, and incloses the park of Mafra.

We now caught a glimpse of the marble towers and dome of the convent, relieved by an azure expanse of ocean, rising above the brow of heathy eminences, diversified here and there by the bushy heads of Italian pines and the tall spires of cypress. The roofs of the edifice were not yet visible, and we continued some time winding about the undulating acclivities in the park before they were discovered. A detachment of lay brothers were waiting to open the gates of the royal inclosure, sadly blackened by a fire, which about a month ago consumed a great part of its wood and verdure. Our approach spread a terrible alarm among the herds of deer, which were peacefully browsing on a slope rather greener than those in its neighbourhood. Off they scudded and took refuge in a thicket of half-burnt pines.

After coasting the wall of the great garden, we turned suddenly the corner, and discovered one of the vast fronts of the convent, appearing like a street of palaces. I cannot pretend that the style of the building is such as a lover of pure Grecian architecture would approve; the windows and doors are many of them fantastically shaped, but at least well proportioned.

I was admiring their ample range as we drove rapidly along, when, upon wheeling round the lofty square pavilion which flanks the edifice, the grand façade, extending above eight hundred feet, opened to my view. The centre is formed by the porticos of the church, richly adorned with columns, niches, and bas-reliefs of marble. On each side two towers, somewhat resembling those of St. Paul's in London, rise to the height of near two hundred feet, and, joining on to the enormous *corps de logis*, the palace terminates to the right and left by its stately pavilions. These towers are light, airy, and clustered with pillars, remarkably beautiful; but their form in general borders too much on a sort of pagodaish style, and wants solemnity. They contain many bells of the largest dimensions, and a famous chime which cost several hundred thousand crusadoes, and which was set playing the moment our arrival was notified. The platform and flight of steps before the columned entrance of the church is strikingly grand; and the dome, which lifts itself up so proudly above the pediment of the portico, merits praise for its lightness and elegance.

My eyes ranged along the vast extent of palace on each side

till they were tired, and I was glad to turn them from the glare of marble and confusion of sculptured ornaments to the blue expanse of the distant ocean. Before the front of this colossal structure a wide level of space extends itself, at the extremity of which several white houses lie dispersed. Though these buildings are by no means inconsiderable, they appear, when contrasted with the immense pile in the neighbourhood, like the booths of workmen; for such I took them upon my first survey, and upon a nearer approach was quite surprised at their real dimensions.

Few objects render the prospect from the platform of Mafra interesting. You look over the roofs of an indifferent village and the summits of sandy acclivities, backed by a boundless stretch of sea. On the left, your view is terminated by the craggy mountains of Cintra; to the right, a forest of pines in the Viscount of Ponte de Lima's extensive garden, affords the eye some small refreshment.

To screen ourselves from the sun, which darted powerfully on our heads, we entered the church, passing through its magnificent portico, which reminded me not a little of the entrance of St. Peter's; and is crowded with the statues of saints and martyrs, carved with infinite delicacy.

The first *coup-d'œil* of the church is very imposing. The high altar, adorned with two majestic columns of reddish variegated marble, each a single block, above thirty feet in height, immediately fixes the eye. Trevisani has painted the altar-piece in a masterly manner: it represents St. Anthony in the ecstasy of beholding the infant Jesus descending into his cell amidst an effulgence of glory.

To-morrow being the festival of St. Augustine, whose followers are the actual possessors of this monastery, all the golden candelabra were displayed, and tapers lighted. After pausing a few minutes in the midst of this bright illumination, we visited the collateral chapels, each enriched with highly finished bassi-relievi and stately portals of black and yellow marble, richly veined, and so highly polished as to reflect objects like a mirror. Never did I behold such an assemblage of beautiful marble as gleamed above, below, and around us. The pavement, the vaulted ceiling, the dome, and even the topmost lantern, is incrusted with the same costly and durable materials. Roses of white marble and

wreaths of palm-branches, most exquisitely sculptured, enrich every part of the edifice. I never saw Corinthian capitals better modelled, or executed with more precision and sharpness, than those of the columns which support the nave.

Having satisfied our curiosity by examining the various ornaments of the altars, we followed our conductor through a long coved gallery into the sacristy, a magnificent vaulted hall, panelled with some beautiful varieties of alabaster and porphyry, and carpeted, as well as a chapel adjoining it, in a style of the utmost magnificence. We traversed several more halls and chapels, adorned with equal splendour, till we were fatigued and bewildered like errant knights in the mazes of an enchanted palace.

I began to think there was no end to these spacious apartments. The monk who preceded us, a good-natured slobering greybeard, taking for granted that I could not understand a syllable of his language, attempted to explain the objects which presented themselves by signs, and would hardly believe his ears, when I asked him in good Portuguese when we should have done with chapels and sacristies. The old fellow seemed vastly delighted with the Meninos, as he called Don Pedro and me ; and to give our young legs an opportunity of stretching themselves, trotted along with such expedition that the Marquis and Verdeil wished him in purgatory. To be sure, we advanced at a most rapid rate, striding from one end to the other of a dormitory, six hundred feet in length, in a minute or two. These vast corridors, and the cells with which they communicate, three hundred in number, are all arched in the most sumptuous and solid manner. Every cell, or rather chamber, for they are sufficiently spacious, lofty, and well-lighted to merit that appellation, is furnished with tables and cabinets of Brazil-wood.

Just as we entered the library, the Abbot of the convent, dressed in his ceremonial habit, advanced to bid us welcome, and invite us to dine with him to-morrow, St. Augustine's day, in the refectory; which it seems is a mighty compliment. We thought proper, however, to decline the honour, being aware that, to enjoy it, we must sacrifice at least two hours of our time, and be half parboiled by the steam of huge roasted calves, turkeys, and gruntlings, which had long been fattening, no doubt, for this solemn occasion.

The library is of a prodigious length, not less than three hundred feet; the arched roof of a pleasing form, beautifully stuccoed, and the pavement of red and white marble. Much cannot be said in praise of the cases in which the books are to be arranged. They are clumsily designed, coarsely executed, and darkened by a gallery which projects into the room in a very awkward manner. The collection, which consists of above sixty thousand volumes, is locked up at present in a suite of apartments which opens into the library. Several well-preserved and richly-illuminated first editions of the Greek and Roman classics were handed to me by the father librarian: but my nimble conductor would not allow me much time to examine them. He set off full speed, and, ascending a winding staircase, led us out upon the roofs of the convent and palace, which form a broad, smooth terrace, bounded by a magnificent balustrade, unencumbered by chimneys, and commanding a bird's-eye view of the courts and garden.

From this elevation the whole plan of the edifice may be comprehended at a glance. In the centre rises the dome, like a beautiful temple from the spacious walks of a royal garden. It is infinitely superior, in point of design, to the rest of the edifice, and may certainly be reckoned among the lightest and best-proportioned in Europe. Don Pedro and Monsieur Verdeil proposed scaling a ladder which leads up to the lantern, but I begged to be excused accompanying them, and amused myself during their absence with ranging about the extensive loggias, now and then venturing a look down on the courts and parterres so far below; but oftener enjoying the prospect of the towers shining bright in the sunbeams, and the azure bloom of the distant sea. A fresh balsamic air, wafted from the orchards of citron and orange, fanned me as I rested on the steps of the dome, and tempered the warmth of the glowing ether.

But I was soon driven from this cloudless, peaceful situation, by a confounded jingle of all the bells; then followed a most complicated sonata, banged off on the chimes by a great proficient. The Marquis, who had climbed up on purpose to enjoy this cataract of what some persons call melodious sounds at its fountain-head, would have me approach to examine the mechanism, and I was half stunned. I know very little indeed

about chimes and clocks, and am quite at a loss for amusement in a belfry. My friend, who inherits a mechanical turn from his father, the renowned patron of clocks and time-pieces, investigated every wheel with minute attention.

His survey finished, we descended innumerable stairs, and retired to the Capitan Mor's, whose jurisdiction extends over the park and district of Mafra. He has seven or eight thousand crusadoes a year, and his habitation wears every appearance of comfort and opulence. The floors are covered with mats of the finest texture, the doors hung with red damask curtains, and our beds, quite new for the occasion, spread with satin coverlids richly embroidered and fringed. We had a most luxurious repast, and a better dessert than even the monks could have given us—the Capitan Mor taking the dishes from his long train of servants, and placing them himself on the table, quite in the feudal style.

After coffee we hurried to vespers in the great church of the convent, and advancing between the range of illuminated chapels, took our places in the royal tribune. We were no sooner seated than the monks entered in procession, preceding their Abbot, who ascended his throne, having a row of sacristans at his feet and canons on his right hand, in their cloth of gold embroidered vestments. The service was chanted with the most imposing solemnity to the awful sound of organs, for there are no fewer than six in the church, all of an enormous size.

When it was ended, being once more laid hold of by the nimble lay brother, we were conducted up a magnificent staircase into the palace. The suite extends seven or eight hundred feet, and the almost endless succession of lofty doors, seen in perspective, strikes with astonishment; but we were soon weary of being merely astonished, and agreed to pronounce the apartments the dullest and most comfortless we had ever beheld; there is no variety in their shape, and little in their dimensions. The furniture being all locked up at Lisbon, a naked sameness universally prevails; not a niche, not a cornice, not a curved moulding breaks the tedious uniformity of dead white walls.

I was glad to return to the convent and refresh my eyes with the sight of marble pillars, and my feet by treading on Persian carpets. We were followed wherever we moved, into every cell, chapel, hall, passage, or sacristy, by a strange

medley of inquisitive monks, sacristans, lay brothers, corregiders, village curates, and country beaux with long rapiers and pigtails. If I happened to ask a question, half-a-dozen all at once poked their necks out to answer it, like turkey-polts when addressed in their native hobble-gobble dialect. The Marquis was quite sick of being trotted after in this tumultuous manner, and tried several times to leave the crowd behind him, by taking sudden turns; but sticking close to our heels, it baffled all his endeavours, and increased to such a degree, that we seemed to have swept the whole convent and village of their inhabitants, and to draw them after us by one of those supernatural attractions we read of in tales and romances.

At length, perceiving a large door open into the garden, we bolted out, and striking into a labyrinth of myrtles and laurels, got rid of our pursuers. The garden, which is about a mile and a half in circumference, contains, besides wild thickets of pine and bay trees, several orchards of lemon and orange, and two or three parterres more filled with weeds than flowers. I was much disgusted at finding this beautiful inclosure so wretchedly neglected, and its luxuriant plants withering away for want of being properly watered.

You may suppose, that after adding a walk in the principal alleys of the garden to our other peregrinations, we began to find ourselves somewhat fatigued, and were not sorry to repose ourselves in the Abbot's apartment, till we were summoned once more to our tribune to hear matins performed. It was growing dark, and the innumerable tapers burning before the altars and in every part of the church, began to diffuse a mysterious light. The organs joined again in full accord, the long series of monks and novices entered with slow and solemn steps, and the Abbot resumed his throne with the same pomp as at vespers. The Marquis began muttering his orisons, the Grand Prior to recite his breviary, and I to fall into a profound reverie, which lasted as long as the service, that is to say, above two hours. Verdeil, ready to expire with ennui, could not help leaving the tribune and the cloud of incense which filled the choir, to breathe a freer air in the body of the church and its adjoining chapels.

It was almost nine when the monks, after chanting a most solemn and sonorous hymn in praise of their venerable father, St. Augustine, quitted the choir. We followed their procession through lofty chapels and arched cloisters, which by a

glimmering light appeared to have neither roof nor termination, till it entered an octagon forty feet in diameter, with fountains in the four principal angles. The monks, after dispersing to wash their hands at the several fountains, again resumed their order, and passed two-and-two under a portal thirty feet high into a vast hall, communicating with their refectory by another portal of the same lofty dimensions. Here the procession made a pause, for this chamber is consecrated to the remembrance of the departed, and styled the Hall de Profundis. Before every repast, the monks standing round it in solemn ranks, silently revolve in their minds the precariousness of our frail existence, and offer up prayers for the salvation of their predecessors. I could not help being struck with awe when I beheld by the glow of flaming lamps, so many venerable figures, in their black and white habits, bending their eyes on the pavement, and absorbed in the most interesting and gloomy of meditations.

The moment allotted to this solemn supplication being passed, every one took his place at the long tables in the refectory, which are made of Brazil-wood, and covered with the whitest linen. Each monk had his glass carafe of water and wine, his plate of apples and salad set before him; neither fish nor flesh were served up, the vigil of St. Augustine's day being observed as a fast with the utmost strictness.

To enjoy at a glance this singular and majestic spectacle, we retreated to a vestibule preceding the octagon, and from thence looked through all the portals down the long row of lamps into the refectory, which, owing to its vast length of full two hundred feet, seemed ending in a point. After remaining a few minutes to enjoy this perspective, four monks advanced with torches to light us out of the convent, and bade us good-night with many bows and genuflections.

Our supper at the Capitan Mor's was very cheerful. We sat up late, nowithstanding our fatigue, talking over the variety of objects that had passed before our eyes in so short a space of time, the crowd of grotesque figures which had stuck to our heels so long and so closely, and the awkward vivacity of the lay brother.

LETTER XXIII.

August 28th, 1787.—I was half asleep, half awake, when the sonorous bells of the convent struck my ears. The Marquis and Don Pedro's voices in earnest conversation with the Capitan Mor in the adjoining chamber, completely roused me. We swallowed our coffee in haste; the Grand Prior reluctantly left his pillow, and accompanied us to high mass. The monks once more exerted their efforts to prevail on us to dine with them; but we remained inflexible, and to avoid their importunities hastened away, as soon as mass was ended, to the Viscount Ponte de Lima's gardens, where the deep shade of the bay and ilex screened us from the excessive heat of the sun.

The Marquis, seating himself by me, near one of those clear and copious fountains with which this magnificent Italian-looking garden is refreshed and enlivened, entered into a most serious and semi-official discourse about my stay in Portugal, and the means which were projecting in a very high quarter to render it not only pleasant to myself, but of some importance to many others.

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I felt relieved when the appearance of Don Pedro and his uncle, who had been walking to the end of an immensely long avenue of pines, warded off a conversation that began to press hard upon me. We returned all together to the Capitan Mor's, and found dinner ready.

Both Don Pedro and myself were sorry to leave Mafra, and should have had no objection to another race along the cloisters and dormitories with the lay brother. The evening was bright and clear, and the azure tints of the distant sea inexpressibly lovely. We drove with such a tumultuous rapidity over the rough-paved roads, that the Marquis and I could hardly hear a word we said to each other. Don Pedro had mounted his horse. Verdeil, who preceded us in the carinho, seemed to outstrip the winds. His mule, one of the most fiery and gigantic of her species, excited by repeated floggings and the shout of a hulking Portuguese postillion, perched up behind the carriage, galloped at an ungovernable rate; and at about a league from the rocks of Cintra, thought proper to jerk out its drivers into the midst

of some bushes at the foot of a lofty bank, nearly perpendicular, where they still remained sprawling when we passed by.

Verdeil hobbled up to us, and pointed to the carinho in the ditch below. Except a slight contusion in the knee, he had received no hurt. I exclaimed immediately, that his escape was miraculous, and that, doubtless, St. Anthony had some hand in it. My friend, who has always the horrors of heresy before his eyes, whispered me that the devil had saved him this time, but might not be so favourably disposed another.

It was not half-past five when we reached Cintra. The Marchioness, the Abade, and the children, were awaiting our arrival.

Feeling my head in a whirl, and my ideas as much jolted and jumbled as my body, I returned home just before it fell dark, to enjoy a few hours of uninterrupted calm. The scenery of my ample saloon, its air of seclusion, its silence, seemed to breathe a momentary tranquillity over my spirits. The mat smoothly laid down, and formed of the finest and most glossy straw, assumed by candlelight a delightful, soft, and harmonious colour. It looked so cool and glistening that I stretched myself upon it. There did I lie supine, contemplating the serene summer sky, and the moon rising slowly from behind the brow of a shrubby hill. A faint breeze blowing aside the curtains, discovered the summit of the woods in the garden, and beyond, a wide expanse of country, terminated by plains of sea and hazy promontories.

LETTER XXIV.

August 29th, 1787.—It was furiously hot, and I trifled away the whole morning in my pavilion, surrounded by fidalgos in flowered bed-gowns, and musicians in violet-coloured accoutrements, with broad straw hats, like bonzes or talapoins, looking as sunburnt, vacant, and listless, as the inhabitants of Ormus or Bengal; so that my company as well as my apartment wore the most decided Oriental appearance: the divan raised a few inches above the floor, the gilt trellis-work of the windows, and the pellucid streams of water rising from a tank immediately beneath them, supplied in endless succession by springs from the native rock.

An agreeable variety prevails in my Asiatic saloon: half its curtains admit no light, and display the richest folds; the other half are transparent, and cast a mild glow on the mat and sofas. Large clear mirrors multiply this profusion of drapery, and several of my guests seemed never tired of running from corner to corner, to view the different groups of objects reflected on all sides in the most unexpected directions, as if they fancied themselves admitted by enchantment to peep into a labyrinth of magic chambers.

One of the party, a very shrewd old Italian priest, who had left his native land before the too-famous earthquake shook more than the half of Lisbon to its foundations, told me he remembered an apartment a good deal in this style, that is to say, bedecked with mirrors and curtains, in a sort of fairy palace communicating with the Nunnery of Odivellas, so famous for the pious retirement of that paragon of splendour and holiness, King John the Fifth. These were delightful days for the monarch and the fair companions of his devotions.

"Oh!" said the old priest very judiciously, "of what avail is the finest cage without birds to enliven it? Had you but heard the celestial harmony of King John's recluses, you would never have sat down contented in your fine tent with the squalling of sopranos and the grumbling of bass-viols. The silver, virgin tones I allude to, proceeding from the holy rêcesses into which no other male mortal except the monarch was ever allowed to penetrate, had an effect I still remember with ecstasy, though at the distance of so many years. Four of our finest singers, two from Venice and two from Naples, attracted by a truly regal munificence, added all that the most consummate taste and science could give to the best voices in Portugal; the result was perfection."

Aguilar, who came to dine with us, and whose mother, when in the bloom of youth and beauty, had been not unfrequently invited to act the part of perhaps more than audience at these edifying parties, confirmed all the wonders the old Italian narrated, and added not a few of the same gold and ruby colour in a strain so extravagantly enthusiastic, that were I to repeat even half the glittering anecdotes he favoured me with, upon the subject of Don John the Fifth's unbounded fervour and magnificence, your imagination would be completely dazzled.

Just as we had removed from the dinner to the dessert-table, which was spread out upon a terrace fronting the principal alley of the gardens, entered the Abade Xavier, in full cry, with a rapturous story of the conversion of an old consumptive Englishwoman, who, it seems, finding herself upon the eve of departure, had called for a priest, to whom she might confess and abjure her errors of every description. Happening to lodge at the Cintra inn, kept by a most flaming Irish Catholic, her commendable desires were speedily complied with, and Mascarenhas and Acciaoli, and two or three other priests and monsignors, summoned to further the good work.

"Great," said the Abade, "are our rejoicings upon the occasion. This very evening the aged innocent is to be buried in triumph: Marialva, San Lorenzo, Asseca, and several more of the principal nobility are already assembled to grace the festival; suppose you were to come with me and join the procession?"

"With all my heart," did I reply; "although I have no great taste for funerals, so gay a one as this you talk of may form an exception."

Off we set, driving as fast as most excellent mules could carry us, lest we should come too late for the entertainment. A great mob was assembled before the door. At one of the windows stood the Grand Prior, looking as if he wished himself a thousand leagues away, and reciting his breviary. I went upstairs, and was immediately surrounded by the old Conde de San Lorenzo and other believers, overflowing with congratulations. Mascarenhas, one of the soundest limbs of the patriarchal establishment, a capital devotee and seraphic doctor, was introduced to me. Acciaoli, whom I was before acquainted with, skipped about the room, rubbing his hands for joy, with a cunning leer on his jovial countenance, and snapping his fingers at Satan, as much as to say, "I don't care a d——n for you. We have got one at least safe out of your clutches, and clear at this very moment of the smoke of your caldron."

There was such a bustle in the interior apartment where the wretched corpse was deposited, such a chanting and praying, for not a tongue was idle, that my head swam round, and I took refuge by the Grand Prior. He by no means relished the party, and kept shrugging up his shoulders, and saying

that it was very edifying—very edifying indeed, and that Acciaoli had been extremely alert, extremely active, and deserved great commendation, but that so much fuss might as well have been spared.

By some hints that dropped, I won't say from whom, I discovered the innocent now on the high road to eternal felicity by no means to have suffered the cup of joy to pass by untasted in this existence, and to have lived many years on a very easy footing, not only with a stout English bachelor, but with several others, married and unmarried, of his particular acquaintance. However, she had taken a sudden tack upon finding herself driven apace down the tide of a rapid consumption, and had been fairly towed into port by the joint efforts of the Irish hostess and the monsignori Mascarenhas and Acciaoli.

"Thrice happy Englishwoman," exclaimed M——a, "what luck is thine! In the next world immediate admission to paradise, and in this thy body will have the proud distinction of being borne to the grave by men of the highest rank.—Was there ever such felicity?"

The arrival of a band of priests and sacristans, with tapers lighted and cross erected, called us to the scene of action. The procession being marshalled, the corpse, dressed in virgin white, lying snug in a sort of rose-coloured bandbox with six silvered handles, was brought forth. M——, who abhors the sight of a dead body, reddened up to his ears, and would have given a good sum to make an honourable retreat; but no retreat could now have been made consistent with piety: he was obliged to conquer his disgust and take a handle of the bier. Another was placed in the murderous gripe of the notorious San Vicente; another fell to the poor old snuffling Conde de San Lorenzo; a fourth to the Viscount d'Asseca, a mighty simple-looking young gentleman; the fifth and sixth were allotted to the Capitaô Mor of Cintra, and to the judge, a gaunt fellow with a hang-dog countenance.

No sooner did the Grand Prior catch sight of the ghastly visage of the dead body as it was being conveyed downstairs in the manner I have recited, than he made an attempt to move on, and precede instead of following the procession; but Acciaoli, who acted as master of the ceremonies, would not let him off so easily: he allotted him the post of honour immediately at the head of the corpse, and placed himself at his left

hand, giving the right to Mascarenhas. All the bells of Cintra struck up a cheerful peal, and to their merry jinglings we hurried along through a dense cloud of dust, a rabble of children frolicking on either side, and their grandmothers hobbling after, telling their beads, and grinning from ear to ear at this triumph over the prince of darkness.

Happily the way to the church was not long, or the dust would have choked us. The Grand Prior kept his mouth close not to admit a particle of it, but Acciaoli and his colleague were too full of their fortunate exploit not to chatter incessantly. Poor old San Lorenzo, who is fat, squat, and pursy, gasping for breath, stopped several times to rest on his journey. Marialva, whom disgust rendered heartily fatigued with his burthen, was very glad likewise to make a pause or two.

We found all the altars in the church blazing with lights, the grave gaping for its immaculate inhabitant, and a numerous detachment of priests and choristers waiting to receive the procession. The moment it entered, the same hymn which is sung at the interment of babes and sucklings burst forth from a hundred youthful voices, incense arose in clouds, and joy and gladness shone in the eyes of the whole congregation.

A murmur of applause and congratulation went round anew, those whom it most concerned receiving with great affability and meekness the compliments of the occasion. Old San Lorenzo, waddling up to the Grand Prior, hugged him in his arms, and strewing him all over with snuff, set him violently a-sneezing. San Vicente, as soon as the innocent was safely deposited, retired in a sort of dudgeon, being never rightly at ease in the presence of his brother-in-law Marialva. As for the latter warm-hearted nobleman, exultation and triumph carried him beyond all bounds of decorum. He scoffed bitterly at heretics, represented in their true colours the actual happiness of the convert, and just as we left the church, cried out loud enough for all those who were near to have heard him, "*Elle se f——iche de nous tous à présent.*"

Their pious toil being ended, Mascarenhas and Acciaoli accompanied us to the heights of Penha Verde, to breathe a fresh air under the odoriferous pines: then, returning in our company to Ramalhaô, partook of a nice collation of iced fruit and sweetmeats, and concluded the evening with much gratifying discourse about the lively scene we had just witnessed.

LETTER XXV.

The principal personages who had so piously distinguished themselves yesterday dined with me this blessed afternoon. Old San Lorenzo has a prodigious memory and a warm imagination, rendered still more glowing by a slight touch of madness. He appears perfectly well acquainted with the general politics of Europe, and though never beyond the limits of Portugal, gave so circumstantial and plausible a detail of what occurred, and of the part he himself acted at the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, that I was completely his dupe, and believed, until I was let into the secret, that he had actually witnessed what he only dreamt of. Notwithstanding the high favour he enjoyed with the Infante Don Pedro, Pombal cast him into a dungeon with the other victims of the Aveiro conspiracy, and for eighteen most melancholy years was his active mind reduced to prey upon itself for sustenance.

Upon the present Queen's accession he was released, and found his intimate friend the Infante sharing the throne; but thinking himself somewhat coolly received and shabbily neglected, he threw the key of chamberlain which was sent him into a place of less dignity than convenience, and retired to the convent of the Necessidades. No means, I have been assured, were left untried by the King to soothe and flatter him; but they all proved fruitless. Since this period, though he quitted the convent, he has never appeared at court, and has refused all employment. Devotion now absorbs his entire soul. Except when the chord of imprisonment and Pombal is touched upon, he is calm and reasonable: I found him extremely so to-day, and full of the most instructive and amusing anecdote.

Coffee over, my company having stretched themselves out at full-length most comfortably, some on the mat, and some on the sofas, to recruit their spirits I suppose, after the pious toils and enthusiastic procession of the day before, I prevailed upon Marialva to escort me to Mrs. Guildermeester's, whom we found in a vast but dingy saloon, her toads squatting around her. She gave us some excellent tea, and a plain sensible loaf of brown bread, accompanied by delicious butter, just fresh from a genuine Dutch dairy, conducted upon the

most immaculate Dutch principles. Donna Genuefa, the toad-passive in waiting, is a little jossish old woman, with a head as round as a humming-top, and a large placid lip, very smiling and good-natured. Miss Coster, the toad-active, has been rather pretty a few years ago, makes tea with decorum, shuts doors and opens windows with judgment, and has a good deal to say for herself when allowed to sit still on her chair.

We had scarcely begun complimenting the mistress of the house upon the complete success of her cow-establishment, when the old consul her spouse entered, with many bows and salutations, bearing a huge Japan tray, upon which was spread out in glittering profusion an ample treasure, both of rough and well-lapidated brilliants, the fruits of his famous and most lucrative contract in the days of Pombal. Some of the largest diamonds, in superb though heavy Dutch or German settings, he eagerly desired Marialva would recommend to the attention of the Queen, and whispered in my ear that he hoped I also would speak a good word for him. I remained as deaf as an adder, and the Marquis as blind as a beetle, to the splendour of the display; so he returned once more to his interior cabinet, with all his hopes out of blossom, and we moved off.

Evening was drawing on, and a drizzling mist overspreading the crags of Cintra. It did not, however, prevent us from going to Mr. Horne's. We passed under arching elms and chestnuts, whose moistened foliage exhaled a fresh woody odour. High above the vapours, which were rolling away just as we emerged from the shady avenue, appeared the turret of the convent of the Penha, faintly tinted by the last rays of the sun, and looking down, like the ark on Mount Ararat, on a sea of undulating clouds.

At Horne's, Aguilar, Bezerra, and the usual set were assembled. The Marquis, as soon as he had made his condescending bows to the right and left, retired to his villa, and I took Horne in my chaise to Mrs. Staits', a little, slender-waisted, wild-eyed woman, by no means unpleasing or flinty-hearted. It was her birthday, and she had congregated most of the English at Cintra, in a damp garden about seventy feet long by thirty-two, illuminated by thirty or forty lanterns. Mrs. Guildermeester was there, covered with diamonds, and sparkling like a star in the midst of this murky atmosphere. We

had a cold funereal supper, under a low tent in imitation of a grotto.

Mrs. Staits' well-disposed, easy-tempered husband placed me next Mrs. Guildermeester, who amused herself tolerably well at the expense of the entertainment. The dingy, subterraneous appearance of the booth, the wan light of the lanterns sparingly scattered along it, and the fragrance of a dish of rather mature prawns placed under my nose, seized me with the idea of being dead and buried. "Alas!" said I to my fair neighbour, "it is all over with us now, and this our first banquet in the infernal regions; we are all equal and jumbled together. There sits the pious presbyterian Mrs. Fussock, with that bridling miss her daughter, and close to them those adulterous doves, Mr.—— and his sultana. Here am I, miserable sinner, right opposite your righteous and much-enduring spouse; a little lower our kind host, that pattern of conjugal meekness and resignation. Hark! don't you hear a lumbering noise? They are letting down a cargo of heavy bodies into a neighbouring tomb."

In this strain did we continue till the subject was exhausted, and it was time to take our departure.

LETTER XXVI.

September 10*th*, 1787.—Adieu to the tranquillity of Cintra; we shall soon have nothing but hubbub and confusion. The Queen is on the point of arriving with all her maids of honour, secretaries of state, dwarfs, negresses, and horses, white, black, and piebald. Half the quintas around will be dried up, military possession having been taken of the aqueducts, and their waters diverted into new channels for the use of an encampment.

I was walking in a long arched bower of citron-trees, when M—— appeared at the end of the avenue, accompanied by the Duke d'Alafoins. This is the identical personage well-known in every part of Europe by the appellation of Duke of Braganza. He has no right, however, to wear that illustrious title, which is merged in the crown. Were he called Duchess Dowager, of anything you please, I think nobody would dispute the propriety of his style, he being so like an old lady of the bed-

chamber, so fiddle-faddle and so coquettish. He had put on rouge and patches, and though he has seen seventy winters, contrived to turn on his heel and glide about with juvenile agility.

I was much surprised at the ease of his motions, having been told that he was a martyr to the gout. After lisping French with a most refined accent, complaining of the sun, and the roads, and the state of architecture, he departed (thank Heaven!) to mark out a spot for the encampment of the cavalry, which are to guard the Queen's sacred person during her residence in these mountains. M—— was in duty bound to accompany him; but left his son and his nephews, the heirs of the house of Tancos, to dine with me.

In the evening, Verdeil, tired with sauntering about the verandas, proposed a ride to a neighbouring village, where there was a fair. He and Don Pedro mounted their horses, and preceded the young Tancos and me in a garden-chair, drawn by a most resolute mule. The roads are abominable, and lay partly along the sloping base of the Cintra mountains, which in the spring, no doubt, are clothed with a tolerable verdure, but at this season every blade of grass is parched and withered. Our carriage-wheels, as we drove sideling along these slippery declivities, pressed forth the odour of innumerable aromatic herbs, half pulverized. Thicknesse perhaps would have said, in his original quaint style, that Nature was treating us with a pinch of her best cephalic. No snuff, indeed, ever threw me into a more violent fit of sneezing.

I could hardly keep up my head when we arrived at the fair, which is held on a pleasant lawn, bounded on one side by the picturesque buildings of a convent of Hieronimites, and on the other by rocky hills, shattered into a variety of uncouth romantic forms; one cliff in particular, called the Pedra d'os Ovos, terminated by a cross, crowns the assemblage, and exhibits a very grotesque appearance. Behind the convent a thick shrubbery of olives, ilex, and citron, fills up a small valley refreshed by fountains, whose clear waters are conducted through several cloisters and gardens, surrounded by low marble columns, supporting fretted arches in the morisco style.

The peasants assembled at the fair were scattered over the lawn: some conversing with the monks; others, half intoxicated, sliding off their donkeys and sprawling upon the ground;

others bargaining for silk-nets and spangled rings, to bestow on their mistresses. The monks, who were busily employed in administering all sorts of consolations, spiritual and temporal, according to their respective ages and vocations, happily paid us no kind of attention, so we escaped being stuffed with sweetmeats, and worried with compliments.

At sunset we returned to Ramalhaô, and drank tea in its lantern-like saloon, in which are no less than eleven glazed doors and windows of large dimensions. The winds were still; the air balsamic; and the sky of so soft an azure that we could not remain with patience under any other canopy, but stept once more into our curricles and drove as far as the Dutch consul's new building, by the mingled light of innumerable stars.

It was after ten when we got back to the Marialva villa, and long before we reached it, we heard the plaintive tones of voices and wind instruments issuing from the thickets. On the margin of the principal basin sat the Marchioness and Donna Henriquetta, and a numerous group of their female attendants, many of them most graceful figures, and listening with all their hearts and souls to the rehearsal of some very delightful music with which her Majesty is to be serenaded a few evenings hence.

It was one of those serene and genial nights when music acquires a double charm, and opens the heart to tender though melancholy impressions. Not a leaf rustled, not a breath of wind disturbed the clear flame of the lights which had been placed near the fountains, and which just served to make them visible. The waters, flowing in rills round the roots of the lemon-trees, formed a rippling murmur; and in the pauses of the concert, no other sound except some very faint whisperings was to be distinguished; so that the enchantment of climate, music, and mystery, all contributed to throw my mind into a sort of trance, from which I was not roused again without a degree of painful reluctance.

LETTER XXVII.

September 12th, 1787.—I was hardly up before the Grand Prior and Mr. Street were announced: the latter abusing

kings, queens, and princes, with all his might, and roaring after liberty and independence; the former complaining of fogs and damps.

As soon as the advocate for republicanism had taken his departure, we went by appointment to the Archbishop Confessor's, and were immediately admitted into his *sanctum sanctorum*, a snug apartment communicating by a winding staircase with that of the Queen, and hung with bright, lively tapestry. A lay brother, fat, round, buffoonical, and to the full as coarse and vulgar as any carter or muleteer in Christendom, entertained us with some very amusing, though not the most decent, palace stories, till his patron came forth.

Those who expect to see the Grand Inquisitor of Portugal a doleful, meagre figure, with eyes of reproof and malediction, would be disappointed. A pleasanter or more honest countenance than that kind Heaven has blessed him with, one has seldom the comfort of looking upon. He received me in the most open, cordial manner, and I have reason to think I am in mighty favour.

We talked about archbishops in England being married. "Pray," said the prelate, "are not your archbishops strange fellows? consecrated in ale-houses, and good bottle companions? I have been told that mad-cap Lord Tyrawley was an archbishop at home." You may imagine how much I laughed at this inconceivable nonsense; and though I cannot say, speaking of his right reverence, that "truths divine came mended from his tongue," it may be allowed, that nonsense itself became more conspicuously nonsensical, flowing from so revered a source.

Whilst we sat in the windows of the saloon, listening to a band of regimental music, we saw Joaô Antonio de Castro, the ingenious mechanician, who invented the present method of lighting Lisbon, two or three solemn Dominicans, and a famous court fool * in a tawdry gala suit, bedizened with mock orders, coming up the steps which lead to the great audience-chamber, all together. "Ay, ay," said the lay brother, who is a shrewd, comical fellow, "behold a true picture of our customers! Three sorts of persons find their way most readily into this palace; men of superior abilities, buffoons, and saints; the

* Don Joaô da Valperra.

first soon lose what cleverness they possessed, the saints become martyrs, and the buffoons alone prosper."

To all this the Archbishop gave his hearty assent by a very significant nod of the head; and being, as I have already told you, in a most gracious, communicative disposition, would not permit me to go away, when I rose up to take leave of him.

"No, no," said he, "don't think of quitting me yet awhile. Let us repair to the Hall of Swans, where all the court are waiting for me, and pray tell me then what you think of our great fidalgos."

Taking me by the tip of the fingers, he led me along through a number of shady rooms and dark passages to a private door, which opened from the Queen's presence-chamber, into a vast saloon, crowded, I really believe, by half the dignitaries of the kingdom: here were bishops, heads of orders, secretaries of state, generals, lords of the bedchamber, and courtiers of all denominations, as fine and as conspicuous as embroidered uniforms, stars, crosses, and gold keys could make them.

The astonishment of this group at our sudden apparition was truly laughable, and, indeed, no wonder; we must have appeared on the point of beginning a minuet—the portly Archbishop in his monastic flowing white drapery, spreading himself out like a turkey in full pride, and myself bowing and advancing in a sort of *pas-grave*, blinking all the while like an owl in sunshine, thanks to my rapid transition from darkness to the most glaring daylight.

Down went half the party upon their knees, some with petitions and some with memorials; those begging for places and promotions, and these for benedictions, of which my revered conductor was by no means prodigal. He seemed to treat all these eager demonstrations of fawning servility with the most contemptuous composure, and pushing through the crowd which divided respectfully to give us passage, beckoned the Viscount Ponte de Lima, the Marquis of Lavradio, the Count d'Obidos, and two or three of the lords in waiting, into a mean little room, not above twenty by fourteen.

After a deal of adulatory complimentation in a most subdued tone from the circle of courtiers, for which they had got nothing in return but rebuffs and gruntling, the Archbishop drew his chair close to mine, and said with a very distinct and audible pronunciation, "My dear Englishman, these are all a

parcel of flattering scoundrels; do not believe one word they say to you. Though they glitter like gold, mud is not meaner —I know them well. Here," continued he, holding up the flap of my coat, "is a proof of English prudence; this little button to secure the pocket is a precious contrivance, especially in grand company; do not leave it off, do not adopt any of our fashions, or you will repent it."

This sally of wit was received with the most resigned complacency by those who had inspired it, and, staring with all my eyes, and listening with all my ears, I could hardly credit either upon seeing the most complaisant gesticulations, and hearing the most abject protestations of devoted attachment to his right reverence's sacred person from all the company.

There is no saying how long this tide of adulation would have continued pouring on, if it had not been interrupted by a message from the Queen, commanding the confessor's immediate attendance. Giving his garments a hearty shake, he trudged off, bawling out to me over his shoulder, "I shall be back in half-an-hour, and you must dine with me."—"Dine with him!" exclaimed the company in chorus: "such an honour never befell any one of us; how fortunate! how distinguished you are!"

Now, I must confess, I was by no means enchanted with this most peculiar invitation; I had a much pleasanter engagement at Penha Verde, one of the coolest and most romantic spots in all this poetic district, and felt no vocation to be cooped up in a close bandboxical apartment, smelling of paint and varnish enough to give the headache; however, there was no getting off. I was told that I must obey, for everybody in these regions, high or low, the royal family themselves not excepted, obeyed the Archbishop, and that I ought to esteem myself too happy in so agreeable an opportunity.

It would be only repeating what is known to every one, who knows anything of courts and courtiers, were I to add the flowery speeches, the warm encomiums, I received from the finest feathered birds of this covey upon my own transcendent perfections, and those of my host that was to be. The half-hour, which, by the by, was more than three-quarters, scarcely sufficed for half those very people had to say in my commendation, who, a few days ago, were all reserve and indifference, if I happened to approach them. My sum-

mons to this envied repast was conveyed to me by no less a personage than the Marquis of M——, who, with gladsome surprise in all his gestures, whispered me, "I am to be of the party too, the first time in my life I can assure you; not a creature besides is to be admitted; for my uncle is gone home tired of waiting for you."

We knocked at the private door, which was immediately opened, and following the same passages through which I had been before conducted, emerged into an antechamber looking into a very neat little kitchen, where the lay brother, with his sleeves tucked up to his shoulders, was making hospitable preparation. A table with three covers was prepared in the tapestry-room, and upon a sofa, in the corner of it, sat the omnipotent prelate, wrapped up in an old snuff-coloured great-coat, sadly patched and tattered.

"Come," said he, clapping his hands after the Oriental fashion, "serve up, and let us be merry. Oh, these women, these women, above stairs, what a plague it is to settle their differences! Who knows better than you, Marquis, what enigmas they are to unriddle? I dare say the Englishman's archbishops have not half such puzzles to get over as I have: well, let us see what we have got for you."

Entered the lay brother with three roasting-pigs, on a huge tray of massive silver, and an enormous pillau, as admirable in quality as in size; and so it had need to have been, for in these two dishes consisted our whole dinner. I am told the fare at the Archbishop's table never varies, and roasting-pigs succeed roasting-pigs, and pillaus pillaus, throughout all the vicissitudes of the seasons, except on certain peculiar fast-days of supreme meagre.

The simplicity of this part of our entertainment was made up by the profusion and splendour of our dessert, which exceeded in variety of fruits and sweetmeats any one of which I had ever partaken. As to the wines, they were admirable, the tribute of every part of the Portuguese dominions offered up at this holy shrine. The Port Company, who are just soliciting the renewal of their charter, had contributed the choicest produce of their happiest vintages, and as I happened to commend its peculiar excellence, my hospitable entertainer, whose good-humour seemed to acquire every instant a livelier glow, insisted upon my accepting several pipes of it, which

were punctually sent me the next morning. The Archbishop became quite jovial, and supposing I was not more insensible to the joys of convivial potations than many of my countrymen, plied me as often and as waggishly as if I had been one of his imaginary archbishops, or Lord Tyrawley himself, returned from those cold precincts where no dinners are given or bottle circulated.

The lay brother was such a fountain of anecdote, the Archbishop in such glee, and Marialva in such jubilation at being admitted to this confidential party, that it is impossible to say how long it would have lasted, had not the hour of her Majesty's evening excursion approached, and the Archbishop been called to accompany her. As Master of the Horse, the Marquis could not dispense with his attendance, so I was left under the guidance of the lay brother, who, leading me through another labyrinth of passages, opened a kind of wicket door, and let me out with as little ceremony as he would have turned a goose adrift on a common.

LETTER XXVIII.

September 19th, 1787.—Never did I behold so fine a day, or a sky of such lovely azure. The M—— were with me by half-past six, and we rode over wild hills, which command a great extent of apparently desert country; for the villages, if there are any, are concealed in ravines and hollows.

Intending to explore the Cintra mountains from one extremity to the other of the range, we placed relays at different stations. Our first object was the Convent of Nossa Senhora da Penha, the little romantic pile of white buildings I had seen glittering from afar when I first sailed by the coast of Lisbon. From this pyramidical elevation the view is boundless: you look immediately down upon an immense expanse of sea, the vast, unlimited Atlantic. A long series of detached clouds of a dazzling whiteness, suspended low over the waves, had a magic effect, and in pagan times might have appeared, without any great stretch of fancy, the cars of marine divinities just risen from the bosom of their element.

There was nothing very interesting in the objects immediately around us. The Moorish remains in the neighbourhood

of the convent are scarcely worth notice, and indeed seem never to have made part of any considerable edifice. They were probably built up with the dilapidations of a Roman temple, whose constructors had perhaps in their turn availed themselves of the fragments of a Punic or Tyrian fane raised on this high place, and blackened with the smoke of some horrible sacrifice.

Amidst the crevices of the mouldering walls, and particularly in the vault of a cistern, which seems to have served both as a reservoir and a bath, I noticed some capillaries and polypodiums of infinite delicacy; and on a little flat space before the convent a numerous tribe of pinks, gentians, and other alpine plants, fanned and invigorated by the pure mountain air. These refreshing breezes, impregnated with the perfume of innumerable aromatic herbs and flowers, seemed to infuse new life into my veins, and, with it, an almost irresistible impulse to fall down and worship in this vast temple of Nature the source and cause of existence.

As we had a very extensive ride in contemplation, I could not remain half so long as I wished on this aërial and secluded summit. Descending by a tolerably easy road, which wound amongst the rocks in many an irregular curve, we followed for several miles a narrow tract over the brow of savage and desolate eminences, to the Cork convent, which answered exactly, at the first glance we caught of it, the picture one represents to one's self of the settlement of Robinson Crusoe. Before the entrance, formed of two ledges of ponderous rock, extends a smooth level of greensward, browsed by cattle, whose tinkling bells filled me with recollections of early days passed amongst wild and alpine scenery. The Hermitage, its cells, chapel, and refectory, are all scooped out of the native marble, and lined with the bark of the cork-tree. Several of the passages about it are not only roofed, but floored with the same material, extremely soft and pleasant to the feet. The shrubberies and garden-plats, dispersed amongst the mossy rocks which lie about in the wildest confusion, are delightful, and I took great pleasure in exploring their nooks and corners, following the course of a transparent, gurgling rill, which is conducted through a rustic water-shoot, between bushes of lavender and rosemary of the tenderest green.

The Prior of this romantic retirement is appointed by the

Marialvas, and this very day his installation takes place, so we were pressed to dine with him upon the occasion, and could not refuse ; but as it was still very early, we galloped on, intending to visit a famous cliff, the Pedra d'Alvidrar, which composes one of the most striking features of that renowned promontory the Rock of Lisbon.

Our road led us through the skirts of the woods which surround the delightful village of Collares, to another range of barren eminences extending along the sea-shore. I advanced to the very margin of the cliff, which is of great height, and nearly perpendicular. A rabble of boys followed at the heels of our horses, and five stout lads, detached from this posse, descended with the most perfect unconcern the dreadful precipice. One in particular walked down with his arms expanded, like a being of a superior order. The coast is truly picturesque, and consists of bold projections, intermixed with pyramidical rocks succeeding each other in theatrical perspective, the most distant crowned by a lofty tower, which serves as a lighthouse.

No words can convey an adequate idea of the bloom of the atmosphere, and the silvery light reflected from the sea. From the edge of the abyss, where I had remained several minutes like one spell-bound, we descended a winding path, about half a mile, to the beach. Here we found ourselves nearly shut in by shattered cliffs and grottoes, a fantastic amphitheatre, the best calculated that can possibly be imagined to invite the sports of sea nymphs. Such coves, such deep and broken recesses, such a play of outline I never beheld, nor did I ever hear so powerful a roar of rushing waters upon any other coast. No wonder the warm and susceptible imagination of the ancients, inflamed by the scenery of the place, led them to believe they distinguished the conchs of tritons sounding in these retired caverns ; nay, some grave Lusitanians positively declared they had not only heard, but seen them, and despatched a messenger to the Emperor Tiberius to announce the event, and congratulate him upon so evident and auspicious a manifestation of divinity.

The tide was beginning to ebb, and allowed us, not without some risk however, to pass into a cavern of surprising loftiness, the sides of which were incrusted with beautiful limpets, and a variety of small shells grouped together.

Against some rude and porous fragments, not far from the aperture through which we had crept, the waves swell with violence, rush into the air, form instantaneous canopies of foam, then fall down in a thousand trickling rills of silver. The flickering gleams of light thrown upon irregular arches admitting into darker and more retired grottos,—the mysterious, watery gloom,—the echoing murmurs and almost musical sounds, occasioned by the conflict of winds and waters,—the strong odour of an atmosphere composed of saline particles,—produced altogether such a bewildering effect upon the senses, that I can easily conceive a mind, poetically given, might be thrown into that kind of tone which inclines to the belief of supernatural appearances. I am not surprised, therefore, at the credulity of the ancients, and only wonder my own imagination did not deceive me in a similar manner.

If solitude could have induced the Nereids to have vouchsafed me an apparition, it was not wanting, for all my company had separated upon different pursuits, and had left me entirely to myself. During the full half-hour I remained shut out from the breathing world, one solitary corvo marino was the only living creature I caught sight of, perched upon an insulated rock, about fifty paces from the opening of the cavern.

I was so stunned with the complicated sounds and murmurs which filled my ears, that it was some moments before I could distinguish the voices of Verdeil and Don Pedro, who were just returned from a hunt after seaweeds and madrapores, calling me loudly to mount on horseback, and make the best of our way to rejoin the Marquis and his attendants, all gone to mass at the Cork convent. Happily, the little detached clouds we had seen from the high point of Nossa Senhora da Penha, instead of melting into the blue sky, had been gathering together, and screened us from the sun. We had therefore a delightful ride, and upon alighting from our palfreys found the old Abade just arrived with Luis de Miranda, the colonel of the Cascais regiment, surrounded by a whole synod of monks, as picturesque as bald pates and venerable beards could make them.

As soon as the Marquis came forth from his devotions, dinner was served up exactly in the style one might have expected at Mequinez or Morocco,—pillaus of different kinds, delicious quails, and pyramids of rice tinged with saffron. Our

dessert, in point of fruit and sweatmeats, was most luxurious, nor would Pomona herself have been ashamed of carrying in her lap such peaches and nectarines as rolled in profusion about the table.

The Abade seemed animated after dinner by the spirit of contradiction, and would not allow the Marquis or Luis de Miranda to know more about the court of John the Fifth, than that of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

To avoid being stunned by the clamours of the dispute, in which two or three monks with stentorian voices began to take part most vehemently, Don Pedro, Verdeil, and I climbed up amongst the hanging shrubberies of arbutus, bay, and myrtle, to a little platform carpeted with delicate herbage, exhaling a fresh, aromatic perfume upon the slightest pressure. There we sat, lulled by the murmur of distant waves, breaking over the craggy shore we had visited in the morning. The clouds came slowly sailing over the hills. My companions pounded the cones of the pines, and gave me the kernels, which have an agreeable almond taste.

The evening was far advanced before we abandoned our peaceful, sequestered station, and joined the Marquis, who had not been yet able to appease the Abade. The vociferous old man made so many appeals to the father-guardian of the convent in defence of his opinions, that I thought we never should have got away. At length we departed, and after wandering about in clouds and darkness for two hours, reached Cintra exactly at ten. The Marchioness and the children had been much alarmed at our long absence, and rated the Abade severely for having occasioned it.

LETTER XXIX.

September 22nd, 1787.—When I got up, the mists were stealing off the hills, and the distant sea discovering itself in all its azure bloom. Though I had been led to expect many visitors of importance from Lisbon, the morning was so inviting that I could not resist riding out after breakfast, even at the risk of not being present at their arrival.

I took the road to Collares, and found the air delightfully soft and fragrant. Some rain which had lately fallen had

refreshed the whole face of the country, and tinged the steeps beyond Penha Verde with purple and green; for the numerous tribe of heaths had started into blossom, and the little irregular lawns, overhung by crooked cork-trees, which occur so frequently by the way-side, are now covered with large white lilies streaked with pink.

Penha Verde itself is a lovely spot. The villa, with its low, flat roofs, and a loggia projecting at one end, exactly resembles the edifices in Gaspar Poussin's landscapes. Before one of the fronts is a square parterre with a fountain in the middle, and niches in the walls with antique busts. Above these walls a variety of trees and shrubs rise to a great elevation, and compose a mass of the richest foliage. The pines, which, by their bright green colour, have given the epithet of verdant to this rocky point (Penha Verde), are as picturesque as those I used to admire so warmly in the Negroni garden at Rome, and full as ancient, perhaps more so: tradition assures us they were planted by the far-famed Don John de Castro, whose heart reposes in a small marble chapel beneath their shade.

How often must that heroic heart, whilst it still beat in one of the best and most magnanimous of human bosoms, have yearned after this calm retirement! Here, at least, did it promise itself that rest so cruelly denied him by the blind perversities of his ungrateful countrymen: for his had been an arduous contest, a long and agonizing struggle, not only in the field under a burning sun, and in the face of peril and death, but in sustaining the glory and good fame of Portugal against court intrigues, and the evil cabals of envious, domestic enemies.

These scenes, though still enchanting, have most probably undergone great changes since his days. The deep forests we read of have disappeared, and with them many a spring they fostered. Architectural fountains, gaudy terraces, and regular stripes of orange gardens, have usurped the place of those wild orchards and gushing rivulets he may be supposed to have often visited in his dreams, when removed some thousand leagues from his native country. All these are changed; but mankind are the same as in his time, equally insensible to the warning voice of genuine patriotism, equally disposed to crouch under the rod of corrupt tyranny. And thus, by the neglect of wise and virtuous men, and a mean subserviency to knavish fools, eras which might become of

gold, are transmuted by an accursed alchymy into iron rusted with blood.

Impressed with all the recollections this most interesting spot could not fail to inspire, I could hardly tear myself away from it. Again and again did I follow the mossy steps, which wind up amongst shady rocks to the little platform terminated by the sepulchral chapel—

> "... densis quam pinus opacat
> Frondibus et nulla lucos agitante procella
> Stridula coniferis modulatur carmina ramis."

You must not wonder then, that I was haunted the whole way home by these mysterious whisperings, nor that, in such a tone of mind, I saw with no great pleasure a procession of two-wheeled chaises, the Lord knows how many outriders, and a caravan of bouras, marching up to the gate of my villa. I had, indeed, been prepared to expect a very considerable influx of visitors; but this was a deluge.

Do not let me send you a catalogue of the company, lest you should be as much annoyed with the detail, as I was with such a formidable arrival *en masse*. Let it suffice to name two of the principal characters, the old pious Conde de San Lorenzo, and the Prior of San Juliaô, one of the Archbishop's prime favourites, and a person of great worship. Mortier's Dutch bible happening to lie upon the table, they began tumbling over the leaves in an egregiously awkward manner. I, who abhor seeing books thumbed, and prints demonstrated by the close application of a greasy fore-finger, snapped at the old Conde, and cast an evil look at the Prior, who was leaning his whole priestly weight on the volume, and creasing its corners.

My musicians were in full song, and Pedro Grua, a capital violoncello, exerted his abilities in his best style; but San Lorenzo was too pathetically engaged in deploring the massacre of the Innocents to pay him any attention, and his reverend companion had entered into a long-winded dissertation upon parables, miracles, and martyrdom, from which I prayed in vain the Lord to deliver me. Verdeil, scenting from afar the saintly flavour of the discourse, stole off.

I cannot say much in praise of the Prior's erudition, even in holy matters, for he positively affirmed that it was Henry the

Eighth himself who knocked St. Thomas à Becket's brains out, and that, by the beast in the Apocalypse, Luther was positively indicated. I hate wrangles, and had it not been for the soiling of my prints, should never have contradicted his reverence; but as I was a little out of humour, I lowered him somewhat in the Conde's opinion, by stating the real period of St. Thomas's murder, and by tolerably specious arguments, shoving the beast's horns off Luther, and clapping them tight upon—whom do you think?—Œcolampadius! So grand a name, which very probably they had never heard pronounced in their lives, carried all before it (adding another instance of the triumph of sound over sense), and settled our bickerings.

We sat down, I believe, full thirty to dinner, and had hardly got through the dessert, when Berti came in to tell me that Madame Ariaga, and a bevy of the palace damsels, were prancing about the quinta on palfreys and bouras. I hastened to join them. There was Donna Maria do Carmo, and Donna Maria da Penha, with her hair flowing about her shoulders, and her large beautiful eyes looking as wild and roving as those of an antelope. I called for my horse, and galloped through alleys and citron bushes, brushing off leaves, fruit, and blossoms. Every breeze wafted to us the sound of French horns and oboes. The ladies seemed to enjoy the freedom and novelty of this scamper prodigiously, and to regret the short time it was doomed to last; for at seven they are obliged to return to strict attendance on the Queen, and had some strange fairy-tale metamorphosis into a pumpkin or a cucumber been the penalty of disobedience, they could not have shown more alarm or anxiety when the fatal hour of seven drew near. Luckily, they had not far to go, for her Majesty and the Royal Family were all assembled at the Marialva villa, to partake of a splendid merenda and see fireworks.

As soon as it fell dark, Verdeil and I set forth to catch a glimpse of the royal party. The Grand Prior and Don Pedro conducted us mysteriously into a snug boudoir which looks into the great pavilion, whose gay, fantastic scenery appeared to infinite advantage by the light of innumerable tapers reflected on all sides from lustres of glittering crystal. The little Infanta Donna Carlotta was perched on a sofa in conversation with the Marchioness and Donna Henriquetta, who, in the true Oiental

fashion, had placed themselves cross-legged on the floor. A troop of maids of honour, commanded by the Countess of Lumieres, sat in the same posture at a little distance. Donna Rosa, the favourite dwarf negress, dressed out in a flaming scarlet riding-habit, not so frolicsome as the last time I had the pleasure of seeing her in this fairy bower, was more sentimental, and leaned against the door, ogling and flirting with a handsome Moor belonging to the Marquis.

Presently the Queen, followed by her sister and daughter-in-law, the Princess of Brazil, came forth from her merenda, and seated herself in front of the latticed window, behind which I was placed. Her manner struck me as being peculiarly dignified and conciliating. She looks born to command; but at the same time to make that high authority as much beloved as respected. Justice and clemency, the motto so glaringly misapplied on the banner of the abhorred Inquisition, might be transferred with the strictest truth to this good princess. During the fatal contest betwixt England and its colonies, the wise neutrality, she persevered in maintaining, was of the most vital benefit to her dominions, and, hitherto, the native commerce of Portugal has attained under her mild auspices an unprecedented degree of prosperity.

Nothing could exceed the profound respect, the courtly decorum her presence appeared to inspire. The Conde de Sampayo and the Viscount Ponte de Lima knelt by the august personages with not much less veneration, I should be tempted to imagine, than Moslems before the tomb of their prophet, or Tartars in the presence of the Dalai Lama. Marialva alone, who took his station opposite her Majesty, seemed to preserve his ease and cheerfulness. The Prince of Brazil and Don Joaô looked not a little ennuied; for they kept stalking about with their hands in their pockets, their mouths in a perpetual yawn, and their eyes wandering from object to object, with a stare of royal vacancy.

A most rigorous etiquette confining the Infants of Portugal within their palaces, they are seldom known to mix even incognito with the crowd; so that their flattering smiles or confidential yawns are not lavished upon common observers. This sort of embalming princes alive, after all, is no bad policy: it keeps them sacred; it concentrates their royal essence, too apt, alas! to evaporate by exposure. What is so liberally paid

for by the willing tribute of the people as a rarity of exquisite relish, should not be suffered to turn mundungus. However the individual may dislike this severe regimen, state pageants might have the goodness to recollect for what purpose they are bedecked and beworshipped.

The Conde de Sampayo, lord in waiting, handed the tea to the Queen, and fell down on both knees to present it. This ceremony over, for everything is ceremony at this stately court, the fireworks were announced, and the royal sufferers, followed by their sufferees, adjourned to a neighbouring apartment. The Marchioness, her daughters, and the Countess of Lumieres, mounted up to the boudoir where I was sitting, and took possession of the windows. Seven or eight wheels, and as many tourbillons began whirling and whizzing, whilst a profusion of admirable line-rockets darted along in various directions, to the infinite delight of the Countess of Lumieres, who, though hardly sixteen, has been married four years. Her youthful cheerfulness, light hair, and fair complexion, put me so much in mind of my Margaret, that I could not help looking at her with a melancholy tenderness: her being with child increased the resemblance, and as she sat in the recess of the window, discovered at intervals by the blue light of rockets bursting high in the air, I felt my blood thrill as if I beheld a phantom, and my eyes were filled with tears.

The last firework being played off, the Queen and the Infantas departed. The Marchioness and the other ladies descended into the pavilion, where we partook of a magnificent and truly royal collation. Donna Maria and her little sister, animated by the dazzling illumination, tripped about in their light muslin dresses, with all the sportiveness of fairy beings, such as might be supposed to have dropped down from the floating clouds, which Pillement has so well represented on the ceiling.

LETTER XXX.

November 8th, 1787.—Verdeil and I rattled over cracked pavements this morning in my rough travelling-coach, for the sake of exercise. The pretext for our excursion was to see a remarkable chapel, inlaid with jasper and lapis-lazuli, in the church of St. Roch; but when we arrived, three or four

masses were celebrating, and not a creature sufficiently disengaged to draw the curtain which veils the altar; so we went out as wise as we came in.

Not having yet seen the cathedral, or See-church, as it is called at Lisbon, we directed our course to that quarter. It is a building of no striking dimensions, narrow and gloomy, without being awful. The earthquake crumbled its glories to dust, if ever it had any, and so dreadfully shattered the chapels with which it is clustered, that very slight traces of their having made part of a mosque are discernible.

Though I had not been led to expect great things, even from descriptions in travels and topographical works, which, like peerage-books and pedigrees, are tenderly inclined to make something of what is next to nothing at all, I hunted away, as became a diligent traveller, after altar-pieces and tombs, but can boast of no discoveries. To be sure, we had not much time to look about us: the priests and sacristans, who fastened upon us, insisted upon our revisiting the corner of a by-staircase, where are to be kissed and worshipped the traces of St. Anthony's fingers. The saint, it seems, being closely pursued by the father of lies and parent of evil, alias Old Scratch (I really could not clearly learn upon what occasion), indented the sign of the cross into a wall of the hardest marble, and stopped his proceedings. A very pleasing little picture hangs up near the miraculous cross, and records the tradition.

All this was admirable; but nothing in comparison with some stories about certain holy crows. "The very birds are in being," said a sacristan. "What!" answered I, "the individual * crows who attended St. Vincent?"—"Not exactly," was the reply (in a whisper, intended for my private ear), "but their immediate descendants."—"Mighty well; this very evening, please God, I will pay my respects to them, and in good company; so adieu for the present."

Our next point was the Theatine convent. We looked into the library, which lies in the same confusion in which it was left by the earthquake; half the books out of their shelves, tumbled one over the other in dusty heaps. A shrewd, active monk, who, I am told, has written a history of the House of

* At the time I wrote this, half Lisbon believed in the individuality of the holy crows, and the other half prudently concealed their scepticism.

Braganza, not yet printed, guided our steps through this chaos of literature; and after searching half-an-hour for some curious voyages he wished to display to us, led us into his cell, and pressed our attention to a cabinet of medals he had been at some pains and expense in collecting.

Not feeling any particular vocation for numismatic researches, I left Verdeil with the monk, puzzling out some very questionable inscriptions, and went to beat up for recruits to accompany me in the evening to the holy crows. First, I found the Abade Xavier, and secondly, the famous missionary preacher from Boa Morte, and then the Grand Prior, and lastly, the Marquis of Marialva; Don Pedro begged not to be left out, so we formed a coach full, and I drove my whole cargo home to dinner. Verdeil was already returned with his reverend medallist, and had also collected the Governor of Goa, Don Frederic de Sousa Cagliariz; his constant attendant, a bullying Savoyard, or Piedmontese Count, by name Lucatelli; and a pale, limber, odd-looking young man, Senhor Manuel Maria, the queerest, but, perhaps, the most original of God's poetical creatures. He happened to be in one of those eccentric, lively moods, which, like sunshine in the depth of winter, come on when least expected. A thousand quaint conceits, a thousand flashes of wild merriment, a thousand satirical darts shot from him, and we were all convulsed with laughter; but when he began reciting some of his compositions, in which great depth of thought is blended with the most pathetic touches, I felt myself thrilled and agitated. Indeed, this strange and versatile character may be said to possess the true wand of enchantment, which, at the will of its master, either animates or petrifies.

Perceiving how much I was attracted towards him, he said to me, "I did not expect an Englishman would have condescended to pay a young, obscure, modern versifier any attention. You think we have no bard but Camoens, and that Camoens has written nothing worth notice but the 'Lusiad.' Here is a sonnet worth half the 'Lusiad:'

CXCII.

"'A fermosura desta fresca serra,
E a sombra dos verdes castanheiros,
O manso caminhar destes ribeiros,
Donde toda a tristeza se desterra;

O rouco som do mar, a estranha terra,
O esconder do Sol pellos outeiros,
O recolher dos gados derradeiros,
Das nuvens pello ar a branda guerra:
Em fim tudo o que a rara natureza
Com tanta variedade nos ofrece,
Me està (se não te vejo) magoando:
Sem ti tudo me enoja, e me aborrece,
Sem ti perpetuamente estou passando
Nas mòres alegrias, mòr tristeza!'

Not an image of rural beauty has escaped our divine poet; and how feelingly are they applied from the landscape to the heart! What a fascinating languor, like the last beams of an evening sun, is thrown over the whole composition! If I am anything, this sonnet has made me what I am; but what am I, compared to Monteiro? Judge," continued he, putting into my hand some manuscript verses of this author, to whom the Portuguese are vehemently partial. Though they were striking and sonorous, I must confess the sonnet of Camoens, and many of Senhor Manuel Maria's own verses, pleased me infinitely more; but in fact, I was not sufficiently initiated into the force and idiom of the Portuguese language to be a competent judge; and it was only in fancying me one, that this powerful genius discovered any want of penetration.

Our dinner was lively and convivial. At the dessert the Abade produced an immense tray of dried fruits and sweetmeats, which one of his hundred and fifty *protégés* had sent him from, I forget what exotic region. These good things he kept handing to us, and almost cramming down our throats, as if we had been turkeys and he a poulterer, whose livelihood depended upon our fattening. "There," said he, "did you ever behold such admirable productions? Our Queen has thousands and thousands of miles with fruit-groves over your head, and rocks of gold and diamonds beneath your feet. The riches and fertility of her possessions have no bounds but the sea, and the sea itself might belong to us if we pleased; for we have such means of ship-building, masts two hundred feet high, incorruptible timbers, courageous seamen. Don Frederic can tell you what some of our heroes achieved not long ago against the gentiles at Goa. Your Joaô Bulles are not half so smart, half so valorous."

Thus he went on, bouncing and roaring us deaf. For

patriotic rodomontades and flourishes, no nation excels the Portuguese, and no Portuguese the Abade!

At length, however, all this tasting and praising having been gone through with, we set forth on the wings of holiness, to pay our devoirs to the holy crows. A certain sum having been allotted time immemorial for the maintenance of two birds of this species, we found them very comfortably established in a recess of a cloister adjoining the cathedral, well fed and certainly most devoutly venerated.

The origin of this singular custom dates as high as the days of St. Vincent, who was martyrized near the Cape which bears his name, and whose mangled body was conveyed to Lisbon in a boat, attended by crows. These disinterested birds, after seeing it decently interred, pursued his murderers with dreadful screams and tore their eyes out. The boat and the crows are painted or sculptured in every corner of the cathedral, and upon several tablets appear emblazoned an endless record of their penetration in the discovery of criminals.

It was growing late when we arrived, and their feathered sanctities were gone quietly to roost: but the sacristans in waiting, the moment they saw us approach, officiously roused them. Oh, how plump and sleek and glossy they are! My admiration of their size, their plumage, and their deep-toned croakings carried me, I fear, beyond the bounds of saintly decorum. I was just stretching out my hand to stroke their feathers, when the missionary checked me with a solemn forbidding look. The rest of the company, aware of the proper ceremonial, kept a respectful distance, whilst the sacristan and a toothless priest, almost bent double with age, communicated a long string of miraculous anecdotes concerning the present holy crows, their immediate predecessors, and other holy crows in the old time before them.

To all these super-marvellous narrations, the missionary appeared to listen with implicit faith, and never opened his lips during the time we remained in the cloister, except to enforce our veneration, and exclaim with pious composure, "*Honrado corvo.*" I really believe we should have stayed till midnight, had not a page arrived from her Majesty to summon the Marquis of M—— and his almoner away.

My curiosity being fully satisfied upon the subject of the

holy crows, I was easily persuaded by the Grand Prior to move off, and drive through the principal streets to see the illuminations in honour of the Infanta, consort to Don Gabriel of Spain, who had produced a prince. A great many idlers being abroad upon the same errand, we proceeded with difficulty, and were very near having the wheels of our carriage dislocated in attempting to pass an old-fashioned, preposterous coach, belonging to one of the dignitaries of the patriarchal cathedral. I cannot launch forth in praise of the illuminations; but some rockets which were let off in the Terreiro do Paco, surprised me by the vast height to which they rose, and the unusual number of clear blue stars into which they burst. The Portuguese excel in fireworks; the late poor, drivelling, saintly king having expended large sums in bringing this art to perfection.

From the Terreiro do Paco we drove to the great square, in which the palace of the Inquisition is situated. There we found a vast mob, to whom three or four Capuchin preachers were holding forth upon the glories and illuminations of a better world. I should have listened not uninterested to their harangues, which appeared, from the specimen I caught of them, to be full of fire and frenzy, had not the Grand Prior, in perpetual awe of the rheumatism, complained of the night; so we drove home. Every apartment of the house was filled with the thick vapour of wax torches, which had been set most loyally a-blazing. I fumed and fretted and threw open the windows. Away went the Grand Prior, and in came Policarpio, the famous tenor singer, who entertained us with several bravura airs of glib and surprising volubility, before supper and during it, in a style equally professional, with many private anecdotes of the *haute noblesse*, his principal employers, not infinitely to their advantage.

I longed, in return, to have enlarged a little upon the adventures of the holy crows, but prudently repressed my inclination. It would ill become a person so well treated as I had been by the crow-fanciers, to handle such subjects with any degree of levity.

LETTER XXXI.

October 19th, 1787.—My health improves every day. The clear exhilarating weather we now enjoy calls forth the liveliest sense of existence. I ride, walk, and climb, as long as I please, without fatiguing myself. The valley of Collares affords me a source of perpetual amusement. I have discovered a variety of paths which lead through chestnut copses and orchards to irregular green spots, where self-sown bays and citron-bushes hang wild over the rocky margin of a little river, and drop their fruit and blossoms into the stream. You may ride for miles along the bank of this delightful water, catching endless perspectives of flowery thickets, between the stems of poplar and walnut. The scenery is truly elysian, and exactly such as poets assign for the resort of happy spirits.

The mossy fragments of rock, grotesque pollards, and rustic bridges you meet with at every step, recall Savoy and Switzerland to the imagination; but the exotic cast of the vegetation, the vivid green of the citron, the golden fruitage of the orange, the blossoming myrtle, and the rich fragrance of a turf embroidered with the brightest coloured and most aromatic flowers, allow me, without a violent stretch of fancy, to believe myself in the garden of the Hesperides, and to expect the dragon under every tree. I by no means like the thoughts of abandoning these smiling regions, and have been twenty times on the point this very day of revoking the orders I have given for my journey. Whatever objections I may have had to Portugal seem to vanish, since I have determined to leave it; for such is the perversity of human nature, that objects appear the most estimable precisely at the moment when we are going to lose them.

There was this morning a mild radiance in the sunbeams, and a balsamic serenity in the air, which infused that voluptuous listlessness, that desire of remaining imparadised in one delightful spot, which, in classical fictions, was supposed to render those who had tasted the lotos forgetful of country, of friends, and of every tie. My feelings were not dissimilar: I loathed the idea of moving away.

Though I had entered these beautiful orchards soon after sunrise, the clocks of some distant conventual churches had

chimed hour after hour before I could prevail upon myself to quit the spreading odoriferous bay-trees under which I had been lying. If shades so cool and fragrant invited to repose, I must observe that never were paths better calculated to tempt the laziest of beings to a walk, than those which opened on all sides, and are formed of a smooth dry sand, bound firmly together, composing a surface as hard as gravel.

These level paths wind about amongst a labyrinth of light and elegant fruit-trees, almond, plum, and cherry, something like the groves of Tonga-taboo, as represented in Cook's voyages; and to increase the resemblance, neat cane fences and low open sheds, thatched with reeds, appear at intervals, breaking the horizontal lines of the perspective.

I had now lingered and loitered away pretty nearly the whole morning, and though, as far as scenery could authorize and climate inspire, I might fancy myself an inhabitant of Elysium, I could not pretend to be sufficiently ethereal to exist without nourishment. In plain English, I was extremely hungry. The pears, quinces, and oranges which dangled above my head, although fair to the eye, were neither so juicy nor gratifying to the palate, as might have been expected from their promising appearance.

Being considerably

"More than a mile immersed within the wood," *

and not recollecting by which clue of a path I could get out of it, I remained at least half-an-hour deliberating which way to turn myself. The sheds and inclosures I have mentioned were put together with care and even nicety, it is true, but seemed to have no other inhabitants than flocks of bantams, strutting about and destroying the eggs and hopes of many an insect family. These glistening fowls, like their brethren described in Anson's voyages, as animating the profound solitudes of the island of Tinian, appeared to have no master.

At length, just as I was beginning to wish myself very heartily in a less romantic region, I heard the loud though not unmusical tones of a powerful female voice, echoing through the arched green avenues; presently, a stout ruddy young peasant, very picturesquely attired in brown and scarlet,

* Dryden.

came hoydening along, driving a mule before her, laden with two enormous panniers of grapes. To ask for a share of this luxuriant load, and to compliment the fair driver, was instantaneous on my part, but to no purpose. I was answered by a sly wink: "We all belong to Senhor Josè Dias, whose corral, or farmyard, is half a league distant. There, Senhor, if you follow that road, and don't puzzle yourself by straying to the right or left, you will soon reach it, and the bailiff, I dare say, will be proud to give you as many grapes as you please. Good-morning;—happy days to you! I must mind my business."

Seating herself between the tantalizing panniers, she was gone in an instant, and I had the good luck to arrive straight at the wicket of a rude, dry wall, winding up and down several bushy slopes in a wild irregular manner. If the outside of this inclosure was rough and unpromising, the interior presented a most cheering scene of rural opulence:—droves of cows and goats milking; ovens, out of which huge cakes of savoury bread had just been taken; ranges of beehives, and long pillared sheds, entirely tapestried with purple and yellow muscadine grapes, half candied, which were hung up to dry. A very good-natured, classical-looking magister pecorum, followed by two well-disciplined, though savage-eyed dogs, whom the least glance of their master prevented from barking, gave me a hearty welcome, and with genuine hospitality not only allowed me the free range of his domain, but set whatever it produced in the greatest perfection before me. A contest took place between two or three curly-haired, chubby-faced children, who should be first to bring me walnuts fresh from the shell, bowls of milk, and cream-cheeses, made after the best of fashions, that of the province of Alemtejo.

I found myself so abstracted from the world in this retirement, so perfectly transported back some centuries into primitive patriarchal times, that I don't recollect having ever enjoyed a few hours of more delightful calm. "Here," did I say to myself, "am I out of the way of courts and ceremonies and commonplace visitations, or salutations, or gossip." But, alas! how vain is all one thinks or says to one's self nineteen times out of twenty.

Whilst I was blessing my stars for this truce to the irksome bustle of the life I had led ever since her Majesty's arrival at Cintra, a loud hallooing, the cracking of whips, and the

tramping of horses, made me start up from the snug corner in which I had established myself, and dispelled all my soothing visions. Louis de Miranda, the colonel of the Cascais regiment, an intimate confidant and favourite of the Prince of Brazil, broke in upon me with a thousand (as he thought) obliging reproaches, for having deserted Ramalhaô the very morning he had come on purpose to dine with me, and to propose a ride after dinner to a particular point of the Cintra mountains, which commands, he assured me, such a prospect as I had not yet been blessed with in Portugal. "It is not even now," said he, "too late. I have brought your horses along with me, whom I found fretting and stamping under a great tree at the entrance of these foolish lanes. Come, get into your stirrups, for God's sake, and I will answer for your thinking yourself well repaid by the scene I shall disclose to you."

As I was doomed to be disturbed and talked out of the Elysium in which I had been lapped for these last seven or eight hours, it was no matter in what position, whether on foot or on horseback; I therefore complied, and away we galloped. The horses were remarkably surefooted, or else, I think, we must have rolled down the precipices; for our road,

"If road it could be call'd where road was none,"

led us by zigzags and short cuts over steeps and acclivities about three or four leagues, till reaching a heathy desert, where a solitary cross staring out of a few weather-beaten bushes, marked the highest point of this wild eminence, one of the most expansive prospects of sea, and plain, and distant mountains, I ever beheld, burst suddenly upon me, rendered still more vast, aërial, and indefinite, by the visionary, magic vapour of the evening sun.

After enjoying a moment or two the general effect, I began tracing out the principal objects in the view, as far, that is to say, as they could be traced, through the medium of the intense glowing haze. I followed the course of the Tagus, from its entrance till it was lost in the low estuaries beyond Lisbon. Cascais appeared with its long reaches of wall and bomb-proof casements like a Moorish town, and by the help of a glass I distinguished a tall palm lifting itself above a cluster of white buildings.

"Well," said I, to my conductor, "this prospect has certainly charms worth seeing; but not sufficient to make me forget that it is high time to get home and refresh ourselves."—"Not so fast," was the answer; "we have still a great deal more to see."

Having acquired, I can hardly tell why or wherefore, a sheep-like habit of following wherever he led, I spurred after him down a rough declivity, thick strewn with rolling stones and pebbles. At the bottom of this descent, a dreary sunburnt plain extended itself far and wide. Whilst we dismounted and halted a few minutes to give our horses breath, I could not help observing, that the view we were now contemplating but ill-rewarded the risk of breaking our necks in riding down such rapid declivities. He smiled, and asked me whether I saw nothing at all interesting in the prospect. "Yes," said I, "a sort of caravan I perceive, about a quarter of a mile off, is by no means uninteresting; that confused group of people in scarlet, with gleaming arms and sumpter-mules, and those striped awnings stretched from ruined walls, present exactly that kind of scenery I should expect to meet with in the neighbourhood of Grand Cairo."—"Come then," said he, "it is time to clear up this mystery, and tell you for what purpose we have taken such a long and fatiguing ride. The caravan which strikes you as being so very picturesque, is composed of the attendants of the Prince of Brazil, who has been passing the whole day upon a shooting-party, and is just at this moment taking a little repose beneath yonder awning. It was by his desire I brought you here, for I have his commands to express his wishes of having half-an-hour's conversation with you, unobserved, and in perfect incognito. Walk on as if you were collecting plants or taking sketches; I will apprize his Royal Highness, and you will meet us as it were by chance, and without any form. No one shall be near enough to hear a word you say to each other, for I will take my station at the distance of at least one hundred paces, and keep off all spies and intruders."

I did as I was directed. A little door in the ruined wall, against which an awning was fixed, opened, and there appeared a young man of rather a prepossessing figure, fairer and ruddier than most of his countrymen, who advanced towards me with a very pleasant engaging countenance, moved his hat in a

dignified graceful manner, and after insisting upon my being covered, began addressing himself to me with great precipitation, in a most fluent lingua-franca, half Italian and half Portuguese. This jargon is very prevalent at the Ajuda* palace, where Italian singers are in much higher request and fashion than persons of deeper tone and intellect.

The first question his Royal Highness honoured me with was, whether I had visited his cabinet of instruments. Upon my answering in the affirmative, and that the apparatus appeared to me extremely perfect, and in admirable order, he observed, "The arrangement is certainly good, for one of my particular friends, a very learned man, has made it; but notwithstanding the high price I have paid, your Ramsdens and Dollonds have treated themselves more generously than me. I believe," continued his Royal Highness, "according to what the Duke d'Alafoens has repeatedly assured me, I am conversing with a person who has no weak, blind prejudices in favour of his country, and who sees things as they are, not as they have been, or as they ought to be. That commercial greediness the English display in every transaction has cost us dear in more than one particular."

He then ran over the ground Pombal had so often trodden bare, both in his state papers and in various publications which had been promulgated during his administration, and I soon perceived of what school his Royal Highness was a disciple.

"We deserve all this," continued he, "and worse, for our tame acquiescence in every measure your cabinet dictates; but no wonder, oppressed and debased as we are, by ponderous, useless institutions. When there are so many drones in a hive, it is in vain to look for honey. Were you not surprised, were you not shocked, at finding us so many centuries behind the rest of Europe?"

I bowed, and smiled. This spark of approbation induced, I believe, his Royal Highness to blaze forth into a flaming

* The royal chapel of the Ajuda, though somewhat fallen from the unequalled splendour it boasted during the sing-song days of the late King, Don Joseph, still displayed some of the finest specimens of vocal manufacture which Italy could furnish. It possessed, at the same time, Carlo Reina, Ferracuti, Totti, Fedelino, Ripa, Gelati, Venanzio, Biagino, and Marini—all these *virtuosi*, with names ending in vowels, were either *contraltos* of the softest note, or *sopranos* of the highest squeakery.

encomium upon certain reforms and purifications which were carrying on in Brabant, under the auspices of his Most Sacred Apostolic Majesty, Joseph the Second. "I have the happiness," continued the Prince, "to correspond not unfrequently with this enlightened sovereign. The Duke d'Alafoens, who has likewise the advantage of communicating with him, never fails to give me the detail of these salutary proceedings. When shall we have sufficient manliness to imitate them?"

Though I bowed and smiled again, I could not resist taking the liberty of observing that such very rapid and vigorous measures as those his Imperial Majesty had resorted to, were more to be admired than imitated; that people who had been so long in darkness, if too suddenly broken in upon by a stream of effulgence, were more likely to be blinded than enlightened; and that blows given at random, by persons whose eyes were closed, were dangerous, and might fall heaviest, perhaps, in directions very opposite to those for which they were intended. This was rather bold, and did not seem to please the novice in boldness.

After a short pause, which allowed him, at least, an opportunity of taking breath, he looked steadily at me, and perceiving my countenance arrayed in the best expression of admiration I could throw into it, resumed the thread of his philosophical discourse, and even condescended to detail some very singular and, as they struck me, most perilous projects. Continuing to talk on with an increased impetus (like those whose steps are accelerated by running down hill), he dropped some vague hints of measures that filled me not only with surprise, but with a sensation approaching to horror. I bowed, but I could not smile. My imagination, which had caught the alarm at the extraordinary nature of the topics he was discoursing upon, conjured up a train of appalling images, and I asked myself more than once whether I was not under the influence of a distempered dream.

Being too much engaged in listening to himself to notice my confusion, he worked as hard as a pioneer in clearing away the rubbish of ages, entered minutely and not unlearnedly into the ancient jurisprudence and maxims of his country, its relations with foreign powers, and the rank from whence it had fallen in modern times, to be attributed in a great measure, he observed, to a blind and mistaken reliance upon the selfish

politics of our predominant island. Although he did not spare my country, he certainly appeared not over partial to his own. He painted its military defects and priest-ridden policy in vivid colours. In short, this part of our discourse was a "*deploratio Lusitanicæ Gentis*," full as vehement as that which the celebrated Damien a Goes, to show his fine Latin and fine humanity, poured forth some centuries ago over the poor wretched Laplanders.

Not approving in any degree the tendency of all this display, I most heartily prayed it might end. Above an hour had passed since it began, and flattered as I was by the protraction of so condescending a conference, I could not help thinking that these fountains of honour are fountains of talk and not of mercy; they flow over, if once set a-going, without pity or moderation. Persons in supreme stations, whom no one ventures to contradict, run on at a furious rate. You frequently flatter yourself they are exhausted; but you flatter yourself in vain. Sometimes indeed, by way of variety, they contradict themselves, and then the debate is carried on between self and self, to the desperation of their subject auditors, who, without being guilty of a word in reply, are involved in the same penalty as the most captious disputant. This was my case. I scarcely uttered a syllable after my first unsuccessful essay; but thousands of words were nevertheless lavished upon me, and innumerable questions proposed and answered by the questioner with equal rapidity.

In return for the honour of being admitted to this monological dialogue, I kept bowing and nodding; and towards the close of the conference, contrived to smile again pretty decently. His Royal Highness, I learned afterwards, was satisfied with my looks and gestures, and even bestowed a brevet upon me of a great deal more erudition than I possessed or pretended to.

The sun set, the dews fell, the Prince retired, Louis de Miranda followed him, and I remounted my horse with an indigestion of sounding phrases, and the most confirmed belief that "*the church was in danger.*"

Tired and exhausted, I threw myself on my sofa the moment I reached Ramalhaô; but the agitation of my spirits would not allow me any repose. I swallowed some tea with avidity, and driving to the palace, evocated the Archbishop Confessor,

who had been locked up above half-an-hour in his interior cabinet. To him I. related all that had passed at this unsought, unexpected interview. The consequences in time developed themselves.

LETTER XXXII.

November 9th, 1787.—M—— and his principal almoner, a renowned missionary, and one of the most eloquent preachers in her Majesty's dominions, were at my door by ten, waiting to take me with them to the convent of Boa Morte. This is a true Golgotha, a place of many skulls, for its inhabitants, though they live, move, and have a sort of being, are little better than skeletons. The priest who officiated appeared so emaciated and cadaverous, that I could hardly have supposed he would have had strength sufficient to elevate the chalice. It did not, however, fall from his hands, and having finished his mass, a second phantom tottered forth and began another. From the pictures and images of more than ordinary ghastliness which cover the chapels and cloisters, and from the deep contrition apparent in the tears, gestures, and ejaculations of the faithful who resort to them, I fancy no convent in Lisbon can be compared with this for austerity and devotion.

M—— shook all over with piety, and so did his companion, whose knees are become horny with frequent kneelings, and who, if one is to believe Verdeil, will end his days in a hermitage, or go mad, or perhaps both. He pretends, too, that it is this greybeard that has added new fuel to the flame of M——'s devotion, and that by mutually encouraging each other, they will soon produce fruits worthy of Bedlam, if not of Paradise. To be sure, this father may boast a conspicuously devout turn, and a most resolute manner of thumping himself; but he must not be too vain. In Lisbon there are at least fifty or sixty thousand good souls, who, without having travelled so far, thump full as sonorously as he. This morning, at Boa Morte, one shrivelled sinner remained the whole time the masses lasted with outstretched arms, in the shape and with all the inflexible stiffness of an old-fashioned branched candlestick. Another contrite personage was so affected at the moment of consecration, that he flattened his nose on the

pavement, and licked the dirt and dust with which it was thickly incrusted.

I must confess that, notwithstanding this very superior display of sanctity, I was not sorry to escape from the dingy cloisters of the convent, and breathe the pure air, and look up at the blue exhilarating sky. The weather being delightful, we drove to several distant parts of the town, to which I was yet a stranger. Returning back by the Bairro Alto, we looked into a new house, just finished building at an enormous expense, by Joaô Ferreira, who, from an humble retailer of leather, has risen, by the Archbishop's favour, to the possession of some of the most lucrative contracts in Portugal. Uglier shaped apartments than those the poor shoeman had contrived for himself I never beheld. The hangings are of satin of the deepest blue, and the fiercest and most sulphureous yellow. Every ceiling is daubed over with allegorical paintings, most indifferently executed, and loaded with gilt ornaments, in the style of those splendid sign-posts which some years past were the glory of High Holborn and St. Giles's.

We were soon tired of all this finery, and as it was growing late, made the best of our way to Belem. Whilst M—— was writing letters, I walked out with Don Pedro on the verandas of the palace, which are washed by the Tagus, and flanked with turrets. The views are enchanting, and the day being warm and serene, I enjoyed them in all their beauty. Several large vessels passed by as we were leaning over the balustrades, and almost touched us with their streamers. Even frigates and ships of the first rate approach within a quarter of a mile of the palace.

There was a greater crowd of attendants than usual round our table at dinner to-day, and the huge massy dishes were brought up by a long train of gentlemen and chaplains, several of them decorated with the orders of Avis and Christ. This attendance had quite a feudal air, and transported the imagination to the days of chivalry, when great chieftains were waited upon like kings by noble vassals.

The Portuguese had need have the stomachs of ostriches to digest the loads of savoury viands with which they cram themselves. Their vegetables, their rice, their poultry, are all stewed in the essence of ham, and so strongly seasoned with pepper and spices, that a spoonful of peas, or a quarter

of an onion, is sufficient to set one's mouth in a flame. With such a diet, and the continual swallowing of sweetmeats, I am not surprised at their complaining so often of headaches and vapours.

Several of the old Marquis of M——'s confidants and buffoons crept forth to have a peep at the stranger, and hear the famous missionary descant upon martyrdom and miracles. The scenery of Boa Morte being fresh in his thoughts, his descriptions were gloomy and appalling: Don Pedro, his sisters, and his cousin, the young Conde d'Atalaya,* gathered round him with all the trembling eagerness of children who hunger and thirst after hobgoblin stories. You may be sure he sent them not empty away. A blacker dose of legendary superstition was never administered. The Marchioness seemed to swallow these terrific narrations with nearly as much avidity as her children, and the old Abade, dropping his chin in a woeful manner, produced an enormous rosary, and kept thumbing his beads and mumbling orisons.

M—— had luckily been summoned to the palace by a special mandate from his royal mistress. Had he been of the party, I fear Verdeil's prophecy would have been accomplished, for never did mortal hold forth with so much scaring energy as this enthusiastic preacher. The most terrible denunciations of divine wrath which ever were thundered forth by ancient or modern writers of sermons and homilies recurred to his memory, and he dealt them about him with a vengeance. The last half-hour of the discourse we were all in total darkness,—nobody had thought of calling for lights: the children were huddled together, scarce venturing to move or breathe. It was a most singular scene.

Full of the ghastly images the good father had conjured up in my imagination, I returned home alone in my carriage, shivering and shuddering. My friends were out, and nothing could be more dreary than the appearance of my fireless apartments.

LETTER XXXIII.

Sunday, November 25th, 1787.—What a morning for the 25th of November! The sun shining most brilliantly, insects

* Now Marquis of Tancos.

fluttering about, and flowers expanding—the late rains having called forth a second spring, and tinted the hills round Almada, on the opposite shore of the Tagus, with a lively green.

I breakfasted alone, Verdeil being gone to St. Roch's to see the ceremony of publishing the bull of the Crusade, which allows good Christians to eat eggs and butter during Lent, upon paying his holiness a few shillings. I stayed at home, hearing a rehearsal of Seguidillas, in preparation for a new intermez at the Salitri theatre, till the hour of mass was over; then getting into the Portuguese chaise, drove headlong to the palace in the Placa do Commercio, and hastened to the Marquis of M——'s apartments. All his family were assembled to dine with him.

Had it not been for the thoughts of my approaching departure, I should have felt more comfort and happiness than has fallen to my lot for a long interval. M——, whose attendance on the Queen may be too justly termed a state of downright slavery, had hardly taken his place at table, before he was called away. The Marchioness Donna Henriquetta, and her little sister, soon retreated to the Camareira-Mor's apartments, and I was left alone with Pedro and Duarte. They seized fast hold, each of a hand, and running like greyhounds through long corridors, took me to a balcony which commands one of the greatest thoroughfares in Lisbon.

The evening was delightful, and vast crowds of people moving about, of all degrees and nations, old and young, active and crippled, monks and officers. Shoals of beggars kept pouring in from every quarter to take their stands at the gates of the palace and watch the Queen's going out; for her Majesty is a most indulgent mother to these sturdy sons of idleness, and scarcely ever steps into her carriage without distributing considerable alms amongst them. By this misplaced charity, hundreds of stout fellows are taught the management of a crutch instead of a musket, and the art of manufacturing sores, ulcers, and scabby pates, in the most loathsome perfection. Duarte, who is all life and gaiety, vaulted upon the railing of the balcony, and hung for a moment or two suspended in a manner that would have frightened mothers and nurses into convulsions. The beggars, who had nothing to do till her Majesty should be forthcoming, seemed to be vastly entertained with these feats of agility.

They soon spied me out, and two brawny lubbers, whom an unfortunate combination of small-pox and king's-evil had deprived of eye-sight, informed, no doubt, by their comrades of what was going forward, began a curious dialogue with voices still deeper and harsher than those of the holy crows: —"Heaven prosper their noble excellencies, Don Duarte Manoel and Don Pedro, and all the Marialvas—sweet dear youths, long may they be blessed with the use of their eyes and of all their limbs! Is that the charitable Englishman in their sweet company?"—"Yes, my comrade," answered the second blind.—"What!" said the first, "that generous favourite of the most glorious Lord St. Anthony? (O gloriosissimo Senhor Sant-Antonio!)"—"Yes, my comrade."—"Oh that I had but my precious eyes, that I might enjoy the sight of his countenance!" exclaimed both together.

By the time the duet was thus far advanced, the halt, the maimed, and the scabby, having tied some greasy nightcaps to the end of long poles, poked them up through the very railing, bawling and roaring out charity, "Charity for the sake of the holy one of Lisbon." Never was I looked up to by a more distorted or frightful collection of countenances. I made haste to throw down a plentiful shower of small copper money, or else Duarte would have twitched away both poles and nightcaps, a frolic by no means to be encouraged, as it might have marred our fame for the readiest and most polite attention to every demand in the name of St. Anthony.

Just as the orators were receiving their portion of pence and farthings, a cry of "There's the Queen, there's the Princess!" carried the whole hideous crowd away to another scene of action, and left me at full liberty to be amused in my turn with the squirrel-like gambols of my lively companion: he is really a fine enterprising boy, bold, alert, and sprightly; quite different from most of his illustrious young relations.

Don Pedro by no means approved my English partiality to such active feats, and after scolding his cousin for skipping about in so hazardous a style, entreated me to take them to the Salitri theatre, where a box had been prepared for us by his father's orders. Upon the whole, I was better entertained than I expected, though the performance lasted above four hours and a half, from seven to near twelve. It consisted of a ranting prose tragedy, in three acts, called

Sesostris, two ballets, a pastoral, and a farce. The decorations were not amiss, and the dresses showy. A shambling, blear-eyed boy, bundled out in weeds of the deepest sable, squeaked and bellowed alternately the part of a widowed princess. Another hob-e-di-hoy, tottering on high-heeled shoes, represented her Egyptian Majesty, and warbled two airs with all the nauseous sweetness of a fluted falsetto. Though I could have boxed his ears for surfeiting mine so filthily, the audience were of a very different opinion, and were quite enthusiastic in their applause.

In the stage-box I observed the mincing Countess of Pombeiro, whose light hair and waxen complexion was finely contrasted by the ebon hue of two little negro attendants perched on each side of her. It is the high ton at present in this court to be surrounded by African implings, the more hideous the more prized, and to bedizen them in the most expensive manner. The Queen has set the example, and the Royal Family vie with each other in spoiling and caressing Donna Rosa, her Majesty's black-skinned, blubber-lipped, flat-nosed favourite.

One of the ballets was admirably got up; upon the rising of the curtain, a strange cabalistic apartment is discovered, where an astrologer appears very busy at a table covered with spheres and astrolabes, arranging certain mysterious images, and pinking their eyes with a gigantic pair of black compasses. A sort of Pierrot announces some inquisitive travellers, who enter with many bows and scrapings. One of them, the chief of the party, an old dapper beau in pink and silver, reminded me very much of the Duke d'Alafoens, and sidled along and tossed his cane about, and seemed to ask questions without waiting for answers, with as good a grace as that janty general. The astrologer, after explaining the wonders of his apartment with many pantomimical contortions, invites his company to follow him, and the scene changes to a long gallery, illuminated with a profusion of lights in gilt branches. The perspective ends in a flight of steps, upon each of which stands a row of figures, pantaloons, harlequins, sultans, sultanas, Indian chiefs, devils, and savages, to all appearance motionless. Pierrot brings in a machine like a hand-organ, and his master begins to grind, the music accompanying. At the first chord, down drop the arms of all the figures; at the second, each

rank descends a step, and so on, till gaining the level of the stage, and the astrologer grinding faster and faster, the supposed clockwork assembly begin a general dance.

Their ballet ended, the same accords are repeated, and all hop up in the same stiff manner they hopped down. The travellers, highly pleased with the show, depart; Pierrot, who longs to be grinding, persuades his master to take a walk, and leave him in possession of the gallery. He consents; but enjoins the gaping oaf upon no account to meddle with the machine, or set the figures in motion. Vain are his directions! no sooner has he turned his back than Pierrot goes to work with all his strength; the figures fall a-shaking as if on the point of disjoining themselves; creak, crack grinds the machine with horrid harshness; legs, arms, and noddles are thrown into convulsions, three steps are jumped at once. Pierrot, frightened out of his senses at the goggle-eyed crowd advancing upon him, clings close to the machine and gives the handle no respite. The music, too, degenerates into the most jarring, screaking sounds, and the figures knocking against each other, and whirling round and round in utter confusion, fall flat upon the stage. Pierrot runs from group to group in rueful despair, tries in vain to reanimate them, and at length losing all patience, throws one over the other, and heaps sultanas upon savages, and shepherds upon devilkins. Most of these personages being represented by boys of twelve or thirteen were easily wielded. After Pierrot has finished tossing and tumbling, he drops down exhausted and lies as dead as his neighbours, hoping to escape unnoticed amongst them. But this subterfuge avails him not; in comes the astrologer armed with his compasses; back he starts at sight of the confounded jumble. Pierrot pays for it all, is soon drawn forth from his lurking-place, and the astrologer grinding in a moderate and scientific manner, the figures lift themselves up, and returning all in *statu quo*, the ballet finishes.

Shall I confess that this nonsense amused me pretty nearly as much as it did my companions, whose raptures were only exceeded by those of Madame de Pombeiro's implings? They, sweet, sooty innocents, kept gibbering and pointing at the man with the black compasses in a manner so completely African and ludicrous, that I thought their contortions the best part of the entertainment.

The play ended, we hastened back to the palace, and traversing a number of dark vestibules and guard-chambers (all of a snore with jaded equerries), were almost blinded with a blaze of light from the room in which supper was served up. There we found in addition to all the Marialvas, the old Marquis only excepted, the Camareira-Mor, and five or six other hags of supreme quality, feeding like cormorants upon a variety of high-coloured and high-seasoned dishes. I suppose the keen air from the Tagus, which blows right into the palace-windows, operates as a powerful whet, for I never beheld eaters, or eateresses, no not even our old acquaintance Madame la Présidente at Paris, lay about them with greater intrepidity. To be sure, it was a splendid repast, quite a banquet. We had manjar branco and manjar real, and among other good things a certain preparation of rice and chicken, which suited me exactly, and no wonder, for this excellent mess had been just tossed up by Donna Isabel de Castro with her own illustrious hands, in a nice little kitchen adjoining the Queen's apartment, in which all the utensils are of solid silver.

The number of lights upon the table, and of attendants and pages in rich uniforms around it, was prodigious; but what interested me far more than all this parade was the sportive good-humour and frankness of the company. How it happened that the presence of a stranger failed to inspire any reserve, is one of those odd circumstances I can hardly account for; especially as the higher orders of the Portuguese are the farthest removed of all persons from admitting any but their nearest relations to these family parties; but so it was, and I felt both flattered and gratified at being permitted to witness the ease and hilarity which prevailed.

The dutiful, affectionate attention of the younger part of the company to their parents was truly amiable; nor do I believe that, at this day in any other realm in Europe, the sacred precept of honouring your father and your mother is so cordially observed as in Portugal. Happy if, in our intercourse with that nation, we had profited in that respect by their example; the peace of so many of our noblest families would not have been disturbed by the lowest connexions, nor their best blood contaminated by matches of the most immoral, degrading tendency. We should not have seen one year a performer

acting the part of a lady this or lady t'other upon the stage, and the next in the drawing-room; nor, upon entering some of our principal houses, have been tempted to cry out, "Bless me! that lovely countenance is the same I recollect adoring by moonlight on the fine broad flagstones of Bond Street or Portland Place!"*

It was now after two in the morning, and I must own, notwithstanding the good cheer of which I had participated, and the kind entertainment I had received, I began to feel a little tired. The children were in such spirits, so full of frolic, and her sublimity the Camareira-Mor so unusually tolerant and condescending, that there was no knowing when the party would break up. Taking, therefore, my leave in due form, I made my retreat, escorted by half-a-dozen torch-bearers.

Just as I had gotten about half-way on my journey through what appeared to me interminable passages, I was arrested in my progress by a pair of Dominicans, Father Rocha and his scarecrow satellite Frè Josè do Rosario. A person less accustomed than I had lately been to such apparitions would have been startled; especially, too, if he had found himself, like me, between the most formidable living pillars of the Holy Inquisition.

"What are you doing here so very late," I could not help exclaiming, "my reverend fathers? What's the matter?"

"The matter is," answered Rocha, with a voice of terrific hoarseness, "that we have caught cold waiting for you in these confounded corridors. The Archbishop, above half-an-hour ago, commanded us to bring you to him dead or alive; but a rascally jackanapes in waiting upon her excellency the Camareira-Mor would not let us in to deliver our message, so we have been airing ourselves hitherto to no purpose."

"Do you know," said Rocha, taking me into a little room where a lamp was still burning, "that affairs do not go on so smoothly as they ought? The Archbishop seems to have lost both time and temper since he has been pressed into the cabinet;

* About the period of the present King's accession, several ladies of this description had bounced into the peerage; but as they did not walk at the coronation, somebody observed, it was odd enough that the peeresses best accustomed to a free use of their limbs, declined stirring a step upon this occasion. Horace Walpole mentions this bon mot in some of his letters; I forget to whom he attributes it.

and, as for the Prince of Brazil and his consort, God forgive me for wishing their advisers and all their intrigues in the lowest abyss of perdition. How can you be scheming a journey to Madrid at this season? The floods are out, and the robbers also, and I tell you what, as the Archbishop says twenty times a day, if you do go you deserve to be drowned and murdered."

"The die is cast," I replied, "and I must take my chance; but really I wish you would have the goodness to bid the Archbishop a very good night in my name, and let me put off asking his benediction till to-morrow, for I am quite jaded."

"Jaded or not," answered the monk, "you must come with me; the wind is up in the Archbishop's brain just at this moment, and by the least contradiction more would become a hurricane."

Finding resistance vain, I suffered myself to be conducted through two or three open courts, very refreshing at this hour you may suppose, and up a little staircase into the Archbishop's interior cabinet. All was still as death—no lay brother bustling about—no sound audible but a low breathing, which now and then swelled into a half suppressed groan, from the agitated prelate, whom we found knee-deep in papers, immersed in thought.

"So," said he, "there you are at last. What have you been doing all this while? Who but a brute of an Englishman would have kept me waiting? Ay, ay, you told me how it would be, and you are right. They plague my soul out. We have twenty rascals pulling as many ways. Your people too are not what they used to be, though Mello would make us believe to the contrary. One thing I know for certain, some infernal mischief is afloat, and unless God's grace is speedily manifested, I see no end to confusion, and wish myself anywhere but where I am. These smooth-tongued, Frenchified, Italian Voltaireists and encyclopedians have poisoned all sound doctrine. Ay," continued he rising up, with an expression of indignation and anger I never saw before on his countenance, "somebody's ears * are poisoned whom I could name. . . .

* The personage in question paid dearly for having listened to evil counsellors and exciting the suspicions of the church. In about a twelvemonth after this conversation, the small pox, not attended to so skilfully as it might have been, was suffered to carry him off, and reduced his imperious widow to a mere cipher in the politics of a court she had

But where is the use of talking to you? You are determined to leave us; be it so. God's providence is above all. He knows what is best for you, and for me, and for these kingdoms. There is your passport, countersigned by your friend Mello; and here is a letter for Lorenzana, and another for his Catholic Majesty's confessor, in which I tell him what an amazing fool you are, and unless you continue one without any remission, we shall soon have you back again. Tell Marialva," he added, addressing himself to Rocha (for the other father had not been admitted), "tell Marialva and all his friends that I have dried up my tongue almost more times than one, in attempting to argue a thousand silly whimsies and crotchets out of his harum-scarum English brain; but come," said he, extending his arms, "I bear no malice; I pity, I do not condemn. Let me give you an embrace, and pray God it may not be the last you will receive from me."

It was, alas! the last I ever received from him, poor, honest-hearted, kind old man! A sort of melancholy foreboding which seemed to pervade all he said in this interview was too soon realized. The fatal tide of events flowing on as it were with redoubled, tremendous velocity, swept away in the course of a few short months from this period the Prince of Brazil, the lovely and amiable Infanta his sister, her husband Don Gabriel of Spain, and the good old King Charles the Third. Not long after, the Archbishop Confessor himself was called from the plenitude of power and the enjoyment of unrivalled influence to the presence of that Being in whose sight "no man living shall be justified;" but as in many trying and peculiar instances he had shown the tenderest mercy, it may tremblingly be hoped that mercy has been shown to him. Notwithstanding the bluntness of his manner, the kindness of his heart, so apparent in his good-humoured, benevolent eye, found its way, almost imperceptibly to himself, to the hearts of others, and tempered the despotic roughness he sometimes assumed both in voice and gesture.

begun very successfully to agitate. To this period the cruel distress of the Queen's mind may be traced. The conflict between maternal tenderness and what she thought political duty, may be supposed with much greater probability to have produced her fatal derangement, than all the scruples respecting the Aveiro and Tavoura confiscations which the fanatical, interested priest, who succeeded my excellent friend, excited.

I still seem to behold the last, earnest, solemn look he gave me when, the door closing, he retired to the cares of state, and I with my escort of torch-bearers and Dominicans hastened forth to breathe the open air, of which I stood greatly in need. Many things I had heard, and many others I conjectured, above all, the reluctance I felt at the bottom of my heart to leave a country in which I had received such uncommon marks of friendship, bore heavily upon me. When I got home, scarcely two hours before daybreak, and tried to compose myself to sleep, I was neither refreshed nor recruited, but experienced the agitation of feverish and broken slumbers.

LETTER XXXIV.

November 26th, 1787.—I went to the church of the Martyrs to hear the matins of Perez and the dead mass of Jomelli performed by all the principal musicians of the royal chapel for the repose of the souls of their deceased predecessors. Such august, such affecting music I never heard, and perhaps may never hear again; for the flame of devout enthusiasm burns dim in almost every part of Europe, and threatens total extinction in a very few years: as yet it glows at Lisbon, and produced this day the most striking musical effect.

Every individual present seemed penetrated with the spirit of those awful words which Perez and Jomelli have set with tremendous sublimity. Not only the music, but the serious demeanour of the performers, of the officiating priest, and indeed of the whole congregation, was calculated to impress a solemn, pious terror of the world beyond the grave. The splendid decoration of the church was changed into mourning, the tribunes hung with black, and a veil of gold and purple thrown over the high altar. In the midst of the choir stood a catafalque surrounded with tapers in lofty candelabra, a row of priests motionless on each side. There was an awful silence for several minutes, and then began the solemn service of the dead. The singers turned pale as they sang, "Timor mortis me conturbat."

After the requiem, the high mass of Jomelli, in commemoration of the deceased, was performed; that famous

composition which begins with a movement imitative of the tolling of bells,

"Swinging slow with sullen roar."

These deep, majestic sounds, mingled with others like the cries for mercy of unhappy beings, around whom the shadows of death and the pains of hell were gathering, shook every nerve in my frame, and called up in my recollection so many affecting images, that I could not refrain from tears.

I scarcely knew how I was conveyed to the palace, where Marialva expected my coming with the utmost impatience. Our conversation took a most serious turn. He entreated me not to forget Portugal, to meditate upon the awful service I had been hearing, and to remember he should not die in peace unless I was present to close his eyes.

In the actual tone of my mind I was doubly touched by this melancholy, affectionate address. It seemed to cut through my soul, and I execrated Verdeil and all those who had been instrumental in persuading me to abandon such a friend. The Grand Prior wept bitterly at seeing my agitation. Marialva went to the Queen, and the Grand Prior home with me. We dined alone; my heart was full of heaviness, and I could not eat. At night we returned to the palace, and there all my sorrow and anxiety was renewed.

SPAIN.

LETTER I.

Wednesday, November 28th, 1787.—The winds are reposing themselves, and the surface of the Tagus has all the smoothness of a mirror. The clouds are dispersing, for it rained heavily in the night, and the sun tinging the distant mountains of Palmella. Charming weather for crossing to Aldea Gallega, that self-same village in whose praises Baretti launches out with so much luxuriance. Horne and his nephew accompanied me to the stairs of Pampulha, where the old Marquis's scalera was waiting for me, with eight-and-twenty rowers in their bright scarlet accoutrements.

Beggars innumerable, blind, dumb, and scabby, followed me almost into the water. No beggars equal those of Portugal for strength of lungs, luxuriance of sores, profusion of vermin, variety and arrangement of tatters, and dauntless perseverance. Several clocks were striking one when we pushed off from the shore, and in a few minutes less than two hours we found ourselves at Aldea Gallega, four leagues from Lisbon. Vast numbers of boats and skiffs passed us in the course of our navigation, which I should have thought highly agreeable in other circumstances; but I felt oppressed and melancholy, the thoughts of my separation from the Marialvas bearing heavily on my mind. Nor could the grand prospects of the river, and its shores, crowded with convents, towers, and palaces, remove this dead cold weight a single instant.

The sun having sunk into watery clouds, the expanse of the Tagus wore a dismal, leaden-coloured aspect. Lisbon was cast into shade, and the huge mass of the convent of San Vicente, crowning an eminence, looked dark and solemn. The low

shores of Aldea Gallega are pleasant and woody; many varieties of the tulip, the iris, and other bulbous roots, already springing up under the protection of spreading pines.

Instead of going to a swinish, stinking estelagem, my courier, Martinho de Mello's prime favourite, and the one he employs upon the most confidential negotiations, conducted me to the postmaster's; a neat, snug habitation, where I found very tolerable accommodations, and dined in the midst of a vapour of burnt lavender, that was near depriving us of all appetite.

Before I sat down to table, I wrote to M——, and sent my letter by the return of the scalera. It was not without difficulty I wrote then, or write at present, for my kind host, the postmaster, has not only the same age, but equal glibness of tongue as the Abade. They were contemporary at Coimbra, and their tongues have kept pace with each other these eighty years. The postmaster is blessed with a most tenacious memory, and having been a mighty reader of operas, serenatas, sonnets, and romances, seemed to sweat verses at every pore. For three hours he gave neither himself nor us any respite, but spouted whole volleys of Metastasio, till he was black in the face. Having washed down the heroic sentiments of Megacle, Artaserse, and Demetrio with a dish of tea, he fell to quoting Spanish and Latin authors, Ovid, Seneca, Lopez de Vega, Calderon, with the same volubility.

As millers sleep sound to the click of their mill, so I, at the end of the two hours' gabbling, was perfectly well-seasoned, and let him run on with the most resigned composure, writing and reading as unconcernedly as if in a convent of Carthusians.

Thursday, November 29th.—There was a continual racket in the house and about the street door all night. At four o'clock the baggage-carts set forth, with a tremendous jingling of bells. The morning was so soft and vernal, that we drank our chocolate on the veranda, which commands a wild rural view of shrubby fields and scattered pines, terminated by a long range of blue hills, most picturesquely varied in form, if not in colour.

After breakfast I went to the church, which Colmenar pretends is magnificently gilt and ornamented; but which, in fact, can boast no other decoration than a few shabby altars, displaying the images of Nossa Senhora, and the patron saint, in tinselled garments of faded taffeta. I knelt on a mouldy

pavement, and felt a chill wind issuing from between the crevices of loose grave-stones, that returned a hollow sound when I rose up and walked over them. A priest, who was saying mass, officiated with uncommon slowness and solemnity. It was hardly light in the recesses of the chapels.

Soon after eight o'clock we left Aldea Gallega, and ploughed through deep furrows of sand at the sober rate of two miles and a half in an hour. On both sides of the heavy road the eye ranges uninterrupted, except by the stems of starveling pines, through a boundless extent of barren country, overgrown with stunted ilex and gum-cistus. The same scenery lasted without any variation full five leagues, to the Venta de Pegoens, where I am now writing, in a long dismal room, with plastered walls, a damp brick-floor, and cracked window-shutters. A pack of half-famished dogs are leaping around me, their eyes ready to start out of their sockets and their ribs out of their skin.

After dining upon the provisions we brought with us, of which the yelping generation enjoyed no inconsiderable share, we proceeded through sandy wilds diversified alone by pines. Not a single habitation occurred, till by a glimmering dubious starlight, for it was now half-past seven, we discovered the extensive front of a palace, built in the year 1729, by John the Fifth, for the accommodation of the Infanta of Spain, who married his son, the late King D. Josè. Here we were to lodge, and I was rather surprised, upon entering a long suite of well-proportioned apartments, to find doors and windows still capable of being shut and opened, large chimneys guiltless of smoking out of their right channel, and painted ceilings without cracks or crevices.

A young priest, neither deficient in manners nor erudition, the keeper of this solitary palace, did his utmost to make our stay in it agreeable. By his attention, we had some chairs and tables placed by a blazing fire, which I worshipped with all the fervour of an ancient Persian. I had need of this consolation, being much disordered by the tiresome dragging of our heavy coach through heaps of sand, and depressed with feverish shiverings.

Friday, November 30th.—It was a long while last night before I composed myself to sleep, and being called at the first dawn, I rose, if possible, more indisposed than when I lay

down; I could scarcely swallow any refreshment, and kept walking disconsolately through the vast range of naked apartments, till the rays of the rising sun entered the windows. The horizon glowed with ruddy clouds; the vast desert levels, discovered from the balconies of the palace, gleamed with dewy verdure. I hastened out to breathe the fresh morning air, impregnated with the perfume of a thousand aromatic shrubs and opening flowers. I could not believe it was the last day of November, but fancied I had slept away the winter, and was just awakened in the month of May.

To enjoy these fragrant breezes in full liberty, I left our carriage to drag along as slowly as the mules pleased, and the muleteers to smoke their cigarros as deliberately as they thought proper; and mounting my horse, rode the best part of the way to Montemor; which is built on the acclivity of a mountain, and surrounded on every side by groves of olives. The whole face of the country is covered by the same vegetation, and, of course, presents no very cheerful appearance.

About a mile from Montemor we crossed a clear river, whose banks are thick-set with poplars, and a light, airy species of broom, intermixed with Indian fig, and laurustine in full blossom. The bees were swarming amongst the flowers, and filling the air with their hum.

Whilst our dinner was preparing we climbed up the green slopes of a lofty hill, to some ruins on its summit; and passing under a narrow arch, discovered a broad flight of steps, which lead to a very ancient church of Gothic uncouth architecture; the pavement almost entirely composed of sepulchral slabs and brasses. As we walked on a platform before the entrance, the sun shone so fiercely that we were glad to descend the eminence on its shadiest side, and take refuge in a cavern-like apartment of the estelagem, very damp and dingy; but in which, however, an excellent dinner awaited our arrival.

We set out at two in a blaze of sunshine, so cheerful and reviving, that I got once more on horseback, and never dismounted till I reached Arroyolos. Just as we came in sight of this ugly old town, which, like Montemor, crowns the summit of a rocky eminence, it fell totally dark; but the postmaster coming forth with torches, lighted us through several winding alleys to his house. I found some pleasant apartments amply furnished, and richly carpeted, and had the comfort of settling

myself by a crackling fire, writing to the whole circle of the Marialvas, and drinking tea without being attacked by quotations of Virgil and Metastasio.

LETTER II.

Saturday, December 1st, 1787.—Hitherto I have had no reason to complain of my accommodations in travelling through Portugal. A mandate from the Governor procured me milk this morning for my breakfast, much against the will of the proprietor, who had a great inclination to keep all to himself. The idea of its being squeezed out by force, persuaded me that it had a very sour taste, and I hardly touched it.

I laid in a stock of carpets for my journey, of strange grotesque patterns and glaring colours, the produce of a manufactory in this town, which employs about three hundred persons. Methinks I begin to write as dully as Major W. Dalrymple, whose dry journal of travels through a part of Spain I had the misfortune of reading in the coach this morning, as we jogged and jolted along the dreary road between Arroyolos and Venta do Duque.

We passed a wild tract of forest-land, and saw numerous herds of swine luxuriously scratching themselves against the rugged bark of cork-trees, and routing up the moss at their roots in search of acorns. Venta do Duque is a sty right worthy of being the capital of hoggish dominions; it can boast, however, of a chimney, which, giving us the opportunity of making a fire, rendered our stay in it less intolerable.

The evening turned out cloudy and cold. Before we arrived at Estremoz, another city on a hill, better and farther seen than it merits, it began to rain with a vengeance. I hear it splashing and driving this moment in the puddles which lie in the vast, forlorn market-place, at one end of which our posada is situated. For Portugal, this posada is by no means indifferent; the walls and ceilings have been neatly whitewashed, and here are chairs and tables. My carpets are of essential service in protecting my feet from the damp brick-floors. I have spread them all round my bed, and they make a flaming exotic appearance.

Sunday, December 2nd.—When I opened my eyes about

seven in the morning, the sky was still dismal and lowering; and a crowd of human figures, enveloped in dark capotes, were just issuing from several dens and lurking-places on each side the entrance of the posada. A fair, which was held to-day, had drawn them together, and they were lamenting in chorus the rainy weather, which prevented the display of their rural finery. Most of these good people had passed the night in the stables of the posada. As I came downstairs, I saw several of their companions of both sexes lying about like the killed and wounded on a field of battle; or, to use a less fatal comparison, like the dead-drunk during a contested election in England.

From the windows of the posada I looked down on a vast opening a thousand feet in breadth, surrounded by irregular buildings: amongst which I could not discover any of those handsome edifices adorned with marble columns, some travelling scribblers mention in terms of the highest commendation. The marble tower, too, they describe, built by Don Deniz, has totally lost its polish, if true it is it ever had any.

Hard by the posada is a little chapel, to which I repaired as soon as I had breakfasted, and heard an outrageous sermon preached by a grey-headed, fiery-eyed capuchin, to a troop of blubbering females.

As it did not positively rain, but only drizzled, after the fashion of my own dear native country, I rode part of the way to Elvas, and traversed boundless wastes of gum-cistus, whose dark green casts a melancholy shade over the face of the country. A mile or two from Elvas, the scene changes to a forest of olives, with fountains by the wayside, and avenues of poplars, which were not yet deprived of their foliage. Above their summits tower the arches of an aqueduct, supported by strong buttresses, and presenting, when seen in perspective, an appearance, in some points of view, not unlike that of a ruined Gothic cathedral. The ramparts of Elvas are laid out and planted much in the style of our English gardens, and form very delightful walks.

Upon entering the town, which seems populous and thriving, we were conducted to a very clean neat house, prepared for our reception by order of the governor, Monsieur de Vallarè. A dignified sort of a page, or groom of the chambers, in a blue coat richly laced, and the order of St. Jago dangling at his

button-hole, stood ready at the door to show us upstairs, and, according to the Portuguese system of politeness, never quitted our elbows a single moment.

I had hardly reconnoitred my new apartments before Monsieur de Vallarè was announced. He brought with him the Abade Correa, one of the luminaries of modern Portuguese literature, whose conversation afforded me great amusement. We sallied out together to visit the fortifications, the stables for the cavalry, and barracks for the soldiers, which are all in admirable order; thanks to the Governor, who is indefatigable in his exertions, and retains at a very experienced age the agility of five-and-twenty. I was delighted with his cheerful, military frankness, and unaffected attentions. He told me, he had stood the fire of our formidable column at Fontenoy, and never enjoyed himself so much in his life, as in the smoke and havoc of that furious engagement.

From one of the bastions to which he conducted us, we had a distinct view of the Fort de la Lippe, erected at an enormous expense on the summit of a woody mountain. Had the weather been fine, it might have tempted me to climb up to it; but showers beginning to descend, I preferred taking shelter in a snug apartment of the Maréchal, enlivened by a blazing pile of aromatic woods, raised up on a grate in a Christian-like manner. The Abade and I drawing close to this hospitable hearth, talked over Lisbon and its inhabitants; whilst Verdeil amused himself with scrutinizing some minerals the Maréchal had collected, and which lay scattered about his room.

In these occupations the time passed till supper. We had pork delicately flavoured, exquisite quails, and salads, prepared in different manners, the most delicious I ever tasted. Our conversation was lively and unrestrained; Correa has an originality of genius and freedom of sentiment, which the terrors of the Inquisition have not yet extinguished.

LETTER III.

Monday, December 3rd, 1787.—The Maréchal and the Abade breakfasted with me, but the rain prevented my taking another walk about the fortifications, and seeing the troops go through their exercise. At ten we set off, well escorted, traversed a

dismal plain, and passed a rivulet which separates the two kingdoms. No sooner had one of our muleteers passed this boundary, than cutting a cross in the turf with his knife, he fell prostrate and kissed the ground with a transport of devotion.

Upon ascending the bank of the rivulet we came in sight of Badajoz and its long narrow bridge over the Guadiana. The custom-house was all mildness and moderation; its harpies have neither flown away with my books, as Bezerra predicted, nor set their talons in my coffers. At sight of my passport, such a one, I believe, as is not very frequently granted, all difficulties gave way, and I was permitted to enter the lonely, melancholy streets of Badajoz, without being stopped an instant, or having my baggage ransacked.

This circumstance, no wonder, gave me greater satisfaction than the aspect of the town and its inhabitants, which is decidedly gloomy. Every house almost has grated windows, and the few human creatures that stared at us from them were muffled up to their noses in heavy mantles of the darkest colours.

We continued winding half-an-hour in slow and solemn procession through narrow streets and alleys, whose gutters were full to the brim, before we reached the large dingy mansion, their excellencies the Governor and Intendant had been so gracious as to allot for my reception. Both these personages were, providentially, laid up with agues, or else, it seems, I should have been honoured with their company the whole evening.

A mob of eyes and mantles, for neither mouths, arms, nor scarcely legs were discernible, assembled round the carriages the moment they halted, and had the patience to remain in the street, silently smoking their cigarros, the whole time I was at dinner.

It was night before I rose from table, crept downstairs, and, though it continued raining at frequent intervals, waded to the cathedral, through much mire, and between several societies of hogs, which lay sweetly sleeping to the murmur of dropping eaves, in the midst of gutters and kennels.

The cathedral is formed by three aisles of equal breadth, supported by pillars and arches, in a tolerably good pointed style. Several lofty chapels open into them, with solemn

gates of iron. In the centre of the middle aisle some bungling architect has awkwardly stuck the choir, not many paces from the principal entrance, and by so doing has shut out the view of the high altar: no great loss, however, the high altar looking little better than a huge mass of rock-work, gilt and burnished. Under the choir is a staircase leading down to the grated entrance of a vault. Lamps were burning before many of the altars, and they distributed a faint light throughout the whole edifice.

I paced silently to and fro in the aisles, whilst the canons were chanting vespers. The choristers still retain the same dress in which St. Anthony is represented, in the picture which hung by the miraculous cross he indented when flying the persecutions of Satan. There was a solemnity in the glimmer of the lamps, the gloomy, indefinite depth of the chapels, and the darkness of the vault beneath the choir, that affected me. I passed a very uncomfortable evening, and a worse night.

Tuesday, December 4th.—Not a wink of sleep did the musquitoes allow me. I was glad to call for lights at four, and was still happier to step into the coach at five; from that hour to half-past-eight I contrived to slumber in a feverish, agitated manner, that did me little good.

When I opened my eyes, I found myself traversing a vast plain as level as the ocean. In summer, this waste must convey none but ideas of sterility and desolation; at present, a fresh verdure, browsed by numerous flocks, rendered its appearance tolerable. The sheep, which are large and thriving, have fleeces as long and as silky as the hair of a barbet, combed every day by the hands of its mistress. I observed numbers of lambs of the most shining whiteness, with black ears and noses; just such neat little animals as those I remember to have seen in the era of Dresden china, at the feet of smirking shepherdesses.

We dined at a village of mud cottages, called Lubaon, situated on some rising ground, about eighteen miles from Badajoz, whose inhabitants seem to have attained the last stage of poverty and wretchedness. Two or three withered hags, that even in the prophet Habakkuk's resurrection of dry bones would have attracted attention, laid hold of me the moment I got out of the carriage. I thought the cold hand

of the weird sisters was giving me a gripe; and trembled lest, whether I would or not, I might hear some fatal prediction. To get out of their way I flew to the church, an old Gothic building, placed on the edge of a steep, which shelves almost perpendicularly down to the banks of the Guadiana, and took sanctuary in its porch. There I remained till summoned to dinner, listening to the murmur of the distant river flowing round sandy islands.

I won the hearts of my muleteers by caressing their mules, and inquiring with a respectful earnestness their names and characters. Capitana may be depended upon in cases of labour and difficulty; Valerosa is skittish and enterprising; Pelerina rather sluggish and cowardly; but La Commissaria unites every mulish perfection; is tractable, steady, and sure-footed, and at the same time (to use the identical expression of my calasero) the greatest driver of dirt before her in the universe. She is certainly an animal of uncommon resolution; and when tired to death by the slow paces of her companions, how often have I wished myself abandoned to her guidance in a light two-wheeled chaise.

We left Lubaon at half-past two, and, as I had the happiness of sleeping almost the whole way to Merida, can give little account of the country.

I was hardly awake when we entered the posada at Merida, and started back, dazzled with an illumination of wax-lights, solemnly stuck in sconces all round a lofty room, with glaring white walls, as if I had been expected to lie in state. In the middle of the apartment stood a large brasier, full of glowing embers, exhaling so strong a perfume of rosemary and lavender, that my head swam, and I reeled like a drunkard. But, as soon as this vile machine was removed, I sat down to write in peace and comfort.

LETTER IV.

Wednesday, December 5th, 1787.—About five leagues from Merida we stopped at a hovel too wretched to afford shelter even to our mules. The situation, amidst green hills scattered over with picturesque ilex is not unpleasant; and such was the mildness of the day, that we spread our table on a knoll,

and dined in the open air, surrounded by geese and asses, to whom I distributed ample slices of water-melons. From this spot three short leagues brought us to Miaxadas, where we arrived at night. Its inhabitants were gathered in clusters at their doors, each holding a lamp, and crying "Biva! Biva!"

Instead of entering a dirty posada, my courier ushered me into a sort of gallery, with a handsome arched roof, matted all over, and set round with gilt chairs. The Donna de la Casa made very low obeisances, not without great primness, and her maids sang tirannas with a wailful monotony that wore my very soul out.

Thursday, December 6th.—Soaking rain and dismal country, thick strewn with fragments of rock. Mountains wrapped in mists,—here and there a few green spots studded with mushrooms. We went seven leagues without stopping, and reached Truxillo by four. It was this gloomy city, situated on a black eminence, that gave birth to the ruthless Pizarro, the scourge of the Peruvians, and the murderer of Atabaliba. We were lodged in a very tolerable posada, unmolested by speech-makers, and heard no noise but the trickling of showers.

Friday, December 7th.—I was awakened at five: the gutters were pouring, and all the water-spouts of Truxillo streaming with rain. An hour and a half did I pass in a ghostly twilight, my candles being packed up, and all the oil of the house expended. It required great exertion on the part of my vigilant courier to prevail on our hulky muleteers to expose themselves to the bad weather.

At length, with much ado, we rumbled out of Truxillo, and, after traversing for the space of two leagues the nakedest and most dreary region I ever beheld, a faint gleam of sunshine melted the deadly white of the thick clouds which hung over us, and, the horizon brightening up, we discovered a wood of cork-trees interspersed with lawns extending as far as the eye could stretch itself. These green spots continued to occur our whole way to Saraseços. There we halted, dined in haste at not half so wretched a posada as I had been taught to expect, and continuing our route, the sky clearing, ascended a mountain, from whose brow we looked down on a valley variegated with patches of ploughed land, wild shrubberies, and wandering rivulets.

We had not much time to feast our eyes with this pastoral

prospect; the clouds soon rolled over it, and we found ourselves in a damp fog. The rest of our journey to Almaraz was a total blank; we saw nothing and heard nothing, and arrived at the place of our destination in perfect health and stupidity.

The Escrivano, who is the judge and jury of the village, was so kind as to accommodate us with his house, and so polite as not to incommode us with his presence. He is a holy man, and a strenuous advocate for the immaculate conception, no less than three large folios upon that mysterious subject lying about in his apartment.

Saturday, December 8th.—Whilst the muleteers were harnessing their beasts together with rotten cords, I took up a little old book of my pious host's, full of the most dismal superstitions, entitled *Espeio de Cristal fino, y Antorcha que aviva el alma*, and read in it till I was benumbed with horror. Many pages are engrossed with a description of the state into which the author imagines we are plunged immediately after death. The body he supposes conscious of all that befalls it in the grave, of exchanging its warm, comfortable habitation for the cold, pestilential soil of a churchyard, conscious that its friends have abandoned it for ever, and of its inability to call them back; to be sensible of the approaches and progress of the most loathsome corruption, and to hear the voice of an accusing angel, recapitulating its offences, and summoning it to the judgment of God. The book ends with a vehement exhortation to repent while there is yet time, and to procure by fervent prayer, and ample donations to religious communities, the intercession of the host of marytrs and of Nuestra Señora. I can easily conceive these scarecrow publications of infinite use in frightening three parts of mankind out of their senses, prolonging the reign and swelling the coffers of the clergy.

The horrid images I had seen in this (Espeio) mirror haunted my fancy for several hours. To dissipate them I mounted my horse, and eagerly inhaled the fresh breezes that blew over springing herbage and wastes of lavender. The birds were singing, the clouds dividing, and discovering long tracts of soft blue sky. I galloped gaily along a level country, interspersed with woods of ilex, to the village of Laval de Moral, where the inhabitants were most devoutly employed in their churches conciliating the favour of the Madonna by keep-

ing holy the festival of the immaculate conception. There the coach coming up with me, I got in; and the mules dragging it along at a rate which in the days of my fire and fury would have made me thump out its bottom with impatience, I fell into a resigned slumber, and am ignorant of every object between Laval de Moral and Calzada, in sight of which town I awoke near five in the evening.

The sun was setting in a sea of molten gold, and tinging the snows of a range of lofty mountains which I discovered for the first time bounding our horizon. I might have seen them before most probably, had they not remained till this evening wrapped up in rainy vapours.

It is at their base the Escurial is situated. I had the consolation of stepping out of the coach at Calzada into a house with cheerful, neat apartments, with an open gallery, where I walked contemplating the red streams of light, and brilliant skirted clouds of the western sky, till dinner came upon table. Though the doors and windows were all wide open, I suffered no inconvenience worth mentioning from cold. The master of the house, a portly, pompous barber-surgeon, most firm in his belief of the supremacy of Spain over every country in the universe, confessed, however, the weather was uncommonly warm, and that so mild a month of December was rather extraordinary.

LETTER V.

Sunday, December 9th, 1787.—The mountains I saw yesterday are called the Sierra de los Gregos, and the winds that blow over their summits begin to chill the atmosphere; but the sun is shining gloriously, and not a cloud obscures his effulgence. The stars were still twinkling in the firmament, when I was attracted to mass in the large gloomy church of a nunnery, by the voices of the Lord's spouses issuing from a sepulchral grate bristled with spikes of iron. These tremulous, plaintive sounds filled me with such sadness, and so many recollections of interesting hours departed never to return, that I felt relieved when I found myself out of sight of the convent, on a cheerful road thronged with passengers.

We passed Oropeza, a picturesque, Italian-looking town, on the brow of a mountain; dined at a venda, in the midst of a

savage tract of forest-land, infamous till within this year or two for robberies and assassinations; and reached Talavera de la Reyna by sunset.

More, I believe, has been said in praise of this town than it deserves. Its appearance is far from cheerful or elegant; and the heavy brick-fronts of the convents and churches as ill designed as executed. The streets, however, are crowded with people, who seem to be moving about with rather more activity than falls to the lot of Spaniards in general. I am told the silk-manufactories at Talavera are in a flourishing state, and have taken a good many hands out of the folds of their mantles.

Colmenar is perpetually leading me into errors and causing me disappointments. He pretends that the inhabitants of this place are nearly as skilful as those of Pekin and Macao in the manufacturing of lacquered wares, and that their pottery is unrivalled; but, upon inquiry, I found the Talaverans no particular proficients in varnish, and that they had neither a cup nor basin to produce in the least preferable to those of other villages.

In one art they are indefatigable, I can answer to my sorrow; that is, singing drawling tirannas to the monotonous accompaniment of a sort of hum-strum or hurdy-gurdy, or the devil knows best what sort of instruments, for such as I hear at this moment under my windows are only fit to be played in his dominions. I am quite at the mercy of these untoward minstrels; if they cease not, I must defer sleeping to another opportunity. Am I then come into Spain to hear hum-strums and hurdy-gurdies? Where are the rapturous seguidillas, of which I have been told such wonders? Do they exist, or, like the japanned wares of the Talaverans, are they only to be found in books of travels and geographical dictionaries?

Monday, December 10th.—I beg Talavera de la Reyna a thousand pardons; it is not quite so frightful as it appeared in the twilight of yesterday evening. Many of the houses have a palace-like appearance, and the interior of the old Gothic cathedral, though not remarkably spacious, has an air of magnificence; the stalls of the choir are elaborately carved, and on each side the high altar curtains of the richest crimson damask fall from the roof in ample folds, and cast a ruddy glow on the pavement.

If Talavera has nothing within its walls to be much boasted of, there are many objects in its environs that merit praise. No sooner had we left its dark crooked streets behind us, than we discovered a thick wood of elms skirting an extensive lawn, beautifully green and level, from which rises the convent of Nuestra Señora del Prayo, crowned by an octangular cupola. This edifice is built of brick incrusted with stone ornaments, and choked up by ranges of arcades and heavy galleries. I have seen several structures which resembled it in the neighbourhood of Antwerp and Brussels; but whether the Spaniards carried this clumsy style of architecture into the Low Countries, or borrowed from thence, is scarcely worth while to determine.

Not far from Nuestra Señora del Prayo we crossed the Tagus, and continued dragging through heavy sands for five tedious hours, without perceiving a habitation, or meeting any animal, biped or quadruped, except herds of swine, in which, I believe, consist the principal riches of this part of the Spanish dominions. I doubt whether the royal sty of Ithaca was half so well garnished as many private ones in New Castile and Estremadura.

Having nothing to look at except a dreary plain bounded by barren, uninteresting mountains, I was reduced to tumble over the trashy collection of books with which I happened in this journey to be provided: poor fiddle-faddle Derrick's Letters from Cork, Chester, and Tunbridge; John Buncle, Esquire's, life, holy rhapsodies, and peregrinations; Shenstone's, Mr. Whistler's and the good Duchess of Somerset's Correspondence; Bray's tour, right worthy of an ass; Heley's fulsome description of the Leasowes and Hagley; Clarke's ponderous account of Spain; and Major Dalrymple's dry, tiresome, and splenetic excursion. There's a set! equal it if you can! I hope to get a better at Madrid, and throw my old stock into the Mançanares.

We dined at a village called Brabo, not in the least worth mentioning, and arrived in due tiresome course, about six in the evening, at Santa Olaya, where my courier had procured us an admirable lodging in the house of a veteran colonel. The principal apartment, in which I pitched my bed, was a lofty gallery, with large folding glazed doors, gilt and varnished, its white walls almost covered with saintly pictures and small

mirrors, stuck near the ceiling, beyond the reach of mortal sight, as if their proprietor was afraid they would wear out by being looked into. On low tables, to the right and left of the door, stood glass-cases, filled with relics and artificial flowers. Stools covered with velvet, and raised not above a foot from the floor, were stationed all round the room. On one of these I squatted like an Oriental, warming my hands over a brasier of coals.

The old lady of the house, followed by a train of curtseying handmaids and sniffling lap-dogs, favoured me with her company the best part of the evening. Her spouse, the colonel, being indisposed, did not make his appearance. Whilst she was entertaining me with a most flourishing detail of the excellent qualities and wonderful acquisitions of the Infant Don Louis, who died about two years ago at his villa in this neighbourhood, some very grotesque figures entered the antechamber, and tinkling their guitars, struck up a seguidilla, that in a minute or two set all the feet in the house in motion. Amongst the dancers, two young girls, whose jetty locks were braided with some degree of elegance, shone forth in a fandango, beating the ground and snapping their fingers with rapturous agility.

This sport lasted a full hour, before they showed the least sign of being tired; then succeeded some languorous tirannas, by no means so delightful as I expected. I was not sorry when the ball ceased, and my kind hostess, moving off with all her dogs and dancers, left me to sup and sleep in tranquillity.

LETTER VI.

Tuesday, December 11th, 1787.—Dismal plains and still more dismal mountains; no indication as yet of the approach to a capital; dined at Santa Cruz; thought we should have been flayed alive by its greedy inhabitants; arrived in the dark at Val de Carneiro; lodged in the house of a certain Don Bernardo, passionately fond of music. The apartment allotted to me contained no less than two harpsichords: one of them, in a fine gilt case, very pompous and sullen, I could scarcely prevail upon the keys to move; next it stood a very sweet-toned modest little spinet, that responded to my touch right willingly,

and, as I happened to play some Brazilian ditties Don Bernardo never heard before, he was so good as to be in raptures.

These were becoming every minute more enthusiastic, when the arrival of the Alcayde Mayor, followed by a priest or two with enormous spectacles on their thin snipish noses, interrupted our harmonious proceedings. This personage came expressly to pay me a visit, and to ask questions about England and her unnatural offspring, the revolted provinces of North America; a country which he had heard was colder and darker than the grave, and spread all over with animals, whether biped or quadruped he could not tell, called *koakeres*, living, like beavers, in strange huts or tabernacles of their own construction.

Wednesday, *December 12th.*—Don Bernardo showed me his cellars, in which are several casks capable of holding thirty or forty hogsheads, and ranges of jars in the shape of the antique amphoræ, ten feet high, and not less than six in diameter. For the first time in my life I tasted the genuine Spanish chocolate, spiced and cinnamoned beyond all endurance. It has put my mouth in a flame, and I do nothing but spit and sputter.

The weather was so damp and foggy that we could hardly see ten yards before us: I cannot, therefore, in conscience abuse the approach to Madrid so much, I believe, as it deserves. About one o'clock, the vapours beginning to dissipate, a huge mass of building, and a confused jumble of steeples, domes, and towers, started on a sudden from the mist. The large building I soon recognised to be the new palace. It is a good deal in the style of Caserta, but being raised on a considerable eminence, produces a more striking effect. At its base flows the pitiful river Mançanares, whose banks were all of a flutter with linen hanging out to dry.

We passed through this rag-fair, between crowds of mahogany-coloured hags, who left off thumping their linen to stare at us, and, crossing a broad bridge over a narrow streamlet, entered Madrid by a gateway of very indifferent architecture. The neat pavement of the streets, the loftiness of the houses, and the cheerful showy appearance of many of the shops, far surpassed my expectation.

Upon entering the Calle d'Alcala, a noble street, much wider than any in London, I was still more surprised. Several magnificent palaces and convents adorn it on both sides. At

one extremity you perceive the trees and fountains of the Prado, and, at the other, the lofty domes of a series of churches. We have got apartments at the Cruz de Malta, which, though very indifferently furnished, have at least the advantage of commanding this prospect. I passed half-an-hour after dinner in one of the balconies gazing upon the variety of equipages which were rattling along. The street sloping gradually down, and being paved with remarkable smoothness, they drove at a furious rate, the high fashion at Madrid; where to hurry along at the risk of laming your mules, and cracking their skulls, is to follow the example of his Majesty, than whom no monarch drives with greater vehemence.

I strolled to the Prado, and was much struck by the spaciousness of the principal walk, the length of the avenues, and the stateliness of the fountains. Though the evening was damp and gloomy, a great many people were rambling about, and a long line of carriages parading. The dress of the ladies, the cut of their servants' liveries, the bags of the coachmen, and the painting of the coaches, were so perfectly Parisian, that I fancied myself on the Boulevards, and looked in vain for those ponderous equipages, surrounded by pages and escudeiros, one reads of in Spanish romances. A total change has taken place, and the original national customs are almost obliterated.

Devotion, however, is not yet banished from the Prado; at the ringing of the Ave-Maria bell, the coaches stopped, the servants took off their hats, the ladies crossed themselves, and the foot-passengers stood motionless, muttering their orisons. There is both opera and play to-night, I believe, but I am in no mood to go to either.

LETTER VII.

Thursday, December 13th, 1787.—It was a heavy damp morning, and I could hardly prevail upon myself to quit my fireside and deliver the Archbishop's most confidential despatches to the Portuguese Ambassador Don Diogo de Noronha.

The Ambassador being gone to the palace, I drove to the Duchess of Berwick's, my old acquaintance, with whom I passed so much of my time at Paris eight years ago. Her dear spouse, so well known at Spa, Brussels, Aix-la-Chapelle,

and all the gaming-places of Europe, by the name, style, and title of Marquis of Jamaica, has been departed these five or six months; and she is now mistress of the most splendid palace in Madrid, of one of the first fortunes, and of the affairs of her only son, the present Duke of Berwick, to whom she is guardian.

The façade of the palace, and the spacious court before it, pleased me extremely. It is in the best style of modern Parisian architecture, simple and graceful. I was conducted up a majestic staircase, adorned with Corinthian columns, and through a long suite of apartments, at the extremity of which, in a saloon hung with embroidered India satin, sat reclined Madame la Duchesse, in all her accustomed nonchalance. She seemed never to have moved from her sofa since I last had the pleasure of seeing her, and is exactly the same good-natured, indolent being, free from malice or uncharitableness: I wish the world was fuller of this harmless, quiet species.

The morning passed most rapidly away in talking over rose-coloured times; I returned home to dine, and as soon as it was dark went back again to Madame de Berwick's, who was waiting tea for me. I like her apartment very much; the angles are taken off by low semicircular sofas, and the space between them and the hangings filled up with slabs of Granadian marble, on which are placed most beautiful porcelain vases with mignonette and rose-trees in full bloom. The fire burnt cheerfully, the table was drawn close to it; the Duchess's little girl, Donna Ferdinanda, sat playing and smiling upon a dog, which she held in her lap, and had swaddled up like an infant.

Soon after tea, the young Duke of Berwick, and a French Abbé his preceptor, came in and stayed with us the remainder of the evening. The Duke is only fourteen and some months, but he is taller than I am, and as plump as the plumpest of partridges. His manners are French, and his address as prematurely formed as his figure. Few, if any, fortunes in Europe equal that which he enjoys, and of which he has expectations; being heir to the house of Alba, seventy thousand a-year at least, and in possession of the Veragua and Liria estates. These immense properties are of course underlet, and wretchedly cultivated. If able exertions were made in their management, his income might be doubled.

Madame de Berwick has not lost her passion for music;

operas and sonatas lie scattered all over her apartment; not only singing-books were lying on the carpet, but singers themselves; three of her musical attendants, a page, and two pretty little Señoras de Honor, having cast themselves carelessly at her feet in the true Spanish, or rather Morisco, fashion, ready to warble forth the moment she gave the signal, which was not long delayed, and never did I hear more soothing voices. The inspiration they gave rise to drove me to the pianoforte, where I played and sang those airs Madame de Berwick was so fond of in the dawn of our acquaintance; when, thanks to her cherished indolence, she had the resignation to listen day after day, and hour after hour, to my romantic rhapsodies. How fervid and ecstatic was I in those days; the toy of every impulse, the willing dupe of every gay illusion! The Duchess tells me, she thinks from the tone of our conversation in the morning, that I am now a little sobered, and may possibly get through this thorny world without losing my wits on its briers.

LETTER VIII.

December 14th, 1787.—One of the best-informed and pleasantest of Spaniards, the Chevalier de Roxas, who had been very intimate both with Verdeil and me at Lausanne, came in a violent hurry this morning to give us a cordial embrace. He seems to have set his heart upon showing us about Madrid, and rendering our stay here as lively as he could make it. Fifty schemes did he propose in half a minute, of visiting museums, churches, and public buildings; of going to balls, theatres, and tertullias.

I took alarm at this busy prospect, drew back into my shell, and began wishing myself in the most perfect incognito; but, alas! to no purpose; it was all in vain.

Roxas, most eager to enter upon his office of cicerone, fidgeted to the window, observed we had still an hour or two of daylight, and proposed an excursion to the palace and gardens of the Buen Retiro. Upon entering the court of the palace, which is surrounded by low buildings, with plastered fronts, sadly battered by wind and weather, I espied some venerable figures in caftans and turbans, leaning against a doorway.

My sparks of Orientalism instantly burst into a flame at such a sight: "Who are those picturesque animals?" said I to our conductor. "Is it lawful to approach them?"—"As often as you please," answered Roxas. "They belong to the Turkish Ambassador, who is lodged, with all his train, at the Buen Retiro, in the identical apartments once occupied by Farinelli; where he held his state levees and opera rehearsals; drilling ministers one day, and tenors and soprani the other: if you have a mind, we will go upstairs and examine the whole menagerie."

No sooner said, no sooner done. I cleared four steps at a leap, to the great delight of his sublime excellency's pages and attendants, and entered a saloon spread with the most sumptuous carpets, and perfumed with the fragrance of the wood of aloes. In a corner of this magnificent chamber sat the Ambassador, Achmet Vassif Effendi, wrapped up in a pelisse of the most precious sables, playing with a light cane he had in his hand, and every now and then passing it under the noses of some tall, handsome slaves, who were standing in a row before him. These figures, fixed as statues, and to all appearance equally insensible, neither moved hand nor eye. As I advanced to make my salam to the Grand Seignor's representative, who received me with a most gracious nod of the head, his interpreter announced to what nation I belonged, and my own individual warm partiality for the Sublime Porte.

As soon as I had taken my seat in a ponderous fauteuil of figured velvet, coffee was carried round in cups of most delicate china, with gold enamelled saucers. Notwithstanding my predilection for the East and its customs, I could hardly get this beverage down, it was so thick and bitter; whilst I was making a few wry faces in consequence, a low murmuring sound, like that of flutes and dulcimers, accompanied by a sort of tabor, issued from behind a curtain which separated us from another apartment. There was a melancholy wildness in the melody, and a continual repetition of the same plaintive cadences, that soothed and affected me.

The Ambassador kept poring upon my countenance, and appeared much delighted with the effect his music seemed to produce upon it. He is a man of considerable talent, deeply skilled in Turkish literature; a native of Bagdad; rich, munificent, and nobly born, being descended from the house of

Barmek: gracious in his address, smooth and plausible in his elocution; but not without something like a spark of despotism in a corner of his eye. Now and then I fancied that the recollection of having recommended the bow-string, and certain doubts whether he might not one day or other be complimented with it in his turn, passed across his venerable and interesting physiognomy.

My eager questions about Bagdad, the tomb of Zobeida, the vestiges of the Dhar al Khalifat, or palace of the Abassides, seemed to excite a thousand remembrances which gave him pleasure; and when I added a few quotations from some of his favourite authors, particularly Mesihi, he became so flowingly communicative, that a shrewd dapper Greek, called Timoni, who acted as his most confidential interpreter, could hardly keep pace with him.

Had not the hour of prayer arrived, our conversation might have lasted till midnight. Rising up with much stateliness, he extended his arms to bid me a good evening, and was assisted along by two good-looking Georgian pages, to an adjoining chamber, where his secretaries, dragoman, and attendants, were all assembled to perform their devotions, each on his little carpet, as if in a mosque; and it was not unedifying to witness the solemnity and abstractedness with which these devotions were performed.

LETTER IX.

Sunday, December 16th, 1787.—The kind, indefatigable Roxas came to conduct us to the Museum and Academy of Arts. It consists of seven or eight apartments, with cases all around them, in a plain, good style; the objects clearly arranged, and exposed to view in a very intelligible manner. There is a vast collection of minerals, corals, madrepores, and stalactites, from all the grottos in the universe; and curious specimens of virgin gold and silver. Amongst the latter, a lump weighing seventy pounds, which was shivered off an enormous mass by a master miner, who, after dining on it, with twelve or thirteen persons, hacked it to pieces, and distributed the fragments amongst his guests.

What pleased me most was a collection of Peruvian vases;

a polished stone, which served the Incas for a mirror; and a linen mantle, which formerly adorned their copper-coloured shoulders, as finely woven as a shawl, and flowered in very nearly a similar manner, the colours as fresh and vivid as if new.

In the apartments of the Academy is a most valuable collection of casts after the serene and graceful antique, and several fierce, obtrusive daubings by modern Spanish artists.

I found our acute, intelligent Chargé-d'affaires' * card lying on my table when I got home, and a great many more, of equal whiteness; such a sight chills me like a fall of snow, for I think of the cold idleness of going about day after day dropping little bits of pasteboard in return. Verdeil and I dined tête-à-tête, planning schemes how to escape formal fussifications. No easy matter, I suspect, if I may judge from appearances.

Our repast and our council over, we hurried to the Prado, where a brilliant string of equipages was moving along in two files. In the middle paraded the state coaches of the royal family, containing their own precious selves, and their wonted accompaniment of bedchamber lords and ladies, duly bedizened. It was a gay spectacle; the music of the Swiss Guards playing, and the evening sun shining bright on their showy uniforms. The Botanic Garden is separated from the walk by magnificent railings and pilasters, placed at regular distances, crowned with vases of aloes and yuccas. The verdure and fountains of this vast inclosure, terminated by a range of columned conservatories, with an entrance of very majestic architecture, has a delightful and striking effect.

From the Prado I drove to the Portuguese Ambassador's, who is laid up with a sore toe. Three diplomatic animals, two males and one female, were nursing and comforting him. He is most supremely dull, and so are his comforters. One of them in particular, who shall be nameless, quite asinine.

The little sympathy I feel for creatures of this genus, made me shorten my visit as much as I decently could, and return home to take up Roxas, who was waiting to accompany us to the Spanish theatre. They were acting the *Barber of Seville*, with Paesiello's music, and singing better than at the opera. The entertainment ended with a sort of intermez, very

* A well-known wily diplomatist, afterwards Ambassador at Constantinople.

characteristic of Spanish manners in low life; in which were introduced seguidillas. One of the dancers, a young fellow, smartly dressed as a maxo, so enraptured the audience, that they made him repeat his dance four times over; a French dancing-master would have absolutely shuddered at the manner in which he turned in his knees. The women sit by themselves in a gallery as dingy as Limbo, wrapped up in their white mantillas, and looking like spectres. I never heard anything like the vociferation with which the pit called out for the seguidillas, nor the frantic deafening applause they bestowed on their favourite dancer.

The play ended at eight, and we came back to tea by our fireside.

LETTER X.

Thursday, December 19th, 1787.—I hate being roused out of bed by a candlelight on a sharp wintry morning; but as I had fixed to-day for visiting the Escurial, and had stationed three relays on the road, in order to perform the journey expeditiously, I thought myself obliged to carry my plan into execution.

The weather was cold and threatening, the sky red and deeply coloured. Roxas was to be of our party, so we drove to his brother, the Marquis of Villanueva's, to take him up. He is one of the best-natured and most friendly of human beings, and I would not have gone without him upon any account; though in general I abhor turning and twisting about a town in search of anybody, let its soul be never so transcendent.

It was past eight before we issued out of the gates of Madrid, and rattled along an avenue on the banks of the Mançanares full gallop, which brought us to the Casa del Campo, one of the King's palaces, wrapped up in groves and thickets. We continued a mile or two by the wall of this inclosure, and leaving La Sarsuela, another royal villa, surrounded by shrubby hillocks, on the right, traversed three or four leagues of a wild, naked country, and, after ascending several considerable eminences, the sun broke out, the clouds partially rolled away, and we discovered the white building of this far-famed monastery,

with its dome and towers detaching themselves from the bold background of a lofty, irregular mountain.

We were now about a league off: the country wore a better aspect than near Madrid. To the right and left of the road, which is of a noble width, and perfectly well made, lie extensive parks of greensward, scattered over with fragments of rock and stumps of oak and ash trees. Numerous herds of deer were standing stock-still, quietly lifting up their innocent noses, and looking us full in the face with their beautiful eyes, secure of remaining unmolested, for the King never permits a gun to be discharged in these inclosures.

The Escurial, though overhung by melancholy mountains, is placed itself on a very considerable eminence, up which we were full half-an-hour toiling, the late rains having washed this part of the road into utter confusion. There is something most severely impressive in the façade of this regal convent, which, like the palace of Persepolis, is overshadowed by the adjoining mountain; nor did I pass through a vaulted cloister into the court before the church, solid as if hewn out of a rock, without experiencing a sort of shudder, to which no doubt the vivid recollection of the black and blood-stained days of our gloomy Queen Mary's husband not slightly contributed. The sun being again overcast, the porches of the church, surmounted by grim statues, appeared so dark and cavern-like, that I thought myself about to enter a subterraneous temple set apart for the service of some mysterious and terrible religion. And when I saw the high altar, in all its pomp of jasper-steps, ranks of columns one above the other, and paintings filling up every interstice, full before me, I felt completely awed.

The sides of the recess, in which this imposing pile is placed, are formed by lofty chapels, almost entirely occupied by catafalques of gilt enamelled bronze. Here, with their crowns and sceptres humbly prostrate at their feet, bareheaded and unhelmed, kneel the figures, large as life, of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and his imperious son, the second Philip, accompanied by those of their unhappy consorts and ill-fated children. My sensations of dread and dreariness were not diminished upon finding myself alone in such company; for Roxas had left me, to deliver some letters to his right reverence the Prior, which were to open to us all the

arcana of this terrific edifice, at once a temple, a palace, a convent, and a tomb.

Presently my amiable friend returned, and with him a tall old monk, with an ash-coloured forbidding countenance, and staring eyes, the expression of which was the farthest removed possible from anything like cordiality. This was the mystagogue of the place—the Prior *in propriâ personâ*, the representative of St. Jerome as far as this monastery and its domain was concerned, and a disciplinarian of celebrated rigidness. He began examining me from head to foot, and, after what I thought rather a strange scrutiny, asked me in broad Spanish what I wished particularly to see; then, turning to Roxas, said loud enough for me to hear him, "He is very young; does he understand what I say to him? But, as I am peremptorily commanded to show him about, I suppose I must comply, though I am quite unused to the office of explaining our curiosities. However, if it must be, it must; so let us begin, and not dally. I have no time to spare, you well know, and have quite enough to do in the choir and the convent."

After this not very gracious exordium, we set forth on our tour. First we visited some apartments with vaulted roofs, painted in arabesque, in the finest style of the sixteenth century; and then a vast hall, which had been used for the celebration of mass whilst the great church was building, where I saw the Perla in all its purity, the most delicately finished work of Raphael, the Pesce, with its divine angel, graceful infant; and devout young Tobit, breathing the very soul of pious, unaffected simplicity. My attention was next attracted by that most profoundly pathetic of pictures, Jacob weeping over the bloody garment of his son; the loftiest proof in existence of the extraordinary powers of Velasquez in the noblest work of art.

These three pictures so absorbed my admiration, that I had little left for a host of glorious performances by Titian and the highest masters, which cover the plain, massive walls of these conventual rooms with a paradise of glowing colours; so I passed along almost as rapidly as my grumbling cicerone could desire, and followed him up several flights of stairs, and through many and many an arched passage and vestibule, all of the sternest Doric, into the choir, which is placed over

the grand western entrance, right opposite, at the distance of more than two hundred feet, to the high altar and its solemn accompaniments. No regal chamber I ever beheld can be compared, in point of sober harmonious majesty, to this apartment, which looks more as if it belonged to a palace than to a church. The series of stalls, designed in a severer taste than was common in the sixteenth century, are carved out of the most precious woods the Indies could furnish. At the extremity of this striking perspective of onyx-coloured seats, columns, and canopies, appears suspended upon a black velvet pall that revered image of the crucified Saviour, formed of the purest ivory, which Cellini seems to have sculptured in moments of devout rapture and inspiration. It is by far his finest work; his Perseus, at Florence, is tame and laboured in comparison.

In a long narrow corridor which runs behind the stalls, panelled all over like an inlaid cabinet, I was shown a beautiful little organ, in a richly chased silver case, which accompanied Charles the Fifth in his African expedition, and must often have gently beguiled the cares of empire, for he played on it, tradition says, almost every evening. That it is worth playing upon even now I can safely vouch, for I never touched any instrument with a tone of more delicious sweetness; and touch it I did, though my austere conductor, the sour-visaged Prior, looked doubly forbidding on the occasion.

The stalls I have just mentioned are much less ornamented than those I have seen in Pavia, and many other monasteries; the ceiling of this noblest of choirs displays the utmost exuberance of decoration—the richest and most gorgeous of spectacles, the heavens and all the powers therein. Imagination can scarcely conceive the pomp and prodigality of pencil with which Luca Giordano has treated this subject, and filled every corner of the vast space it covers with well-rounded forms, that seem actually starting from the glowing clouds with which they are environed.

"Is not this fine?" said the monk; "you can have nothing like it in your country. And now be pleased to move forward, for the day is wasting, and you will have little time left to examine our inestimable relics, and the jewelled shrines in which they are deposited."

We went down from the choir, I can scarcely tell whither,

such is the extent and intricacy of this stupendous edifice. We passed, I believe, through some of the lateral chapels at the great church, into several quadrangles, one in particular, with a fountain under a cupola in the centre, surrounded by Doric arcades, equal in justness of proportion and architectural terseness to Palladio's court in the convent of St. Giorgio Maggiore.

LETTER XI.

My lord the Prior not favouring a prolonged survey, I reluctantly left this beautiful court, and was led into a low gallery, roofed and wainscoted with cedar, lined on both sides by ranges of small doors of different-coloured Brazil-wood, looking, in appearance at least, as solid as marble. Four sacristans, and as many lay brothers, with large lighted flambeaux of yellow wax in their hands, and who, by the by, never quitted us more the remainder of our peregrinations, stood silent as death, ready to unlock those mysterious entrances.

The first they opened exhibited a buffet, or *crédence*, three stories high, set out with many a row of grinning skulls, looking as pretty as gold and diamonds could make them; the second, every possible and impossible variety of odds and ends, culled from the carcasses of martyrs; the third, enormous ebony presses, the secrets of which I begged for pity's sake might not be intruded upon for my recreation, as I began to be heartily wearied of sight-seeing; but when my conductors opened the fourth mysterious door, I absolutely shrank back, almost sickened by a perfume of musk and ambergris.

A spacious vault was now disclosed to me—one noble arch, richly panelled: had the pavement of this strange-looking chamber been strewn with saffron, I should have thought myself transported to the enchanted courser's forbidden stable we read of in the tale of the Three Calenders.

The Prior, who is not easily pleased, seemed to have suspicions that the seriousness of my demeanour was not entirely orthodox; I overheard him saying to Roxas, "Shall I show him the Angel's feather? you know we do not display this our most valued, incomparable relic to everybody, nor unless upon special occasions."—"The occasion is sufficiently special,"

answered my partial friend; "the letters I brought to you are your warrant, and I beseech your reverence to let us look at this gift of Heaven, which I am extremely anxious myself to adore and venerate."

Forth stalked the Prior, and drawing out from a remarkably large cabinet an equally capacious sliding shelf—(the source, I conjecture, of the potent odour I complained of)—displayed, lying stretched out upon a quilted silken mattress, the most glorious specimen of plumage ever beheld in terrestrial regions—a feather from the wing of the Archangel Gabriel, full three feet long, and of a blushing hue more soft and delicate than that of the loveliest rose. I longed to ask at what precise moment this treasure beyond price had been dropped—whether from the air—on the open ground, or within the walls of the humble tenement at Nazareth; but I repressed all questions of an indiscreet tendency—the why and wherefore, the when and how, for what and to whom such a palpable manifestation of archangelic beauty and wingedness had been vouchsafed.

We all knelt in silence, and when we rose up, after the holy feather had been again deposited in its perfumed lurking-place, I fancied the Prior looked doubly suspicious, and uttered a sort of *humph* very doggedly; nor did his ill-humour evaporate upon my desiring to be conducted to the library. "It is too late for you to see the precious books and miniatures by daylight," replied the crusty old monk, "and you would not surely have me run the risk of dropping wax upon them. No, no, another time, another time, when you come earlier. For the present, let us visit the tomb of the Catholic kings; there our flambeaux will be of service, without doing injury."

He led the way through a labyrinth of cloisters, gloomy as the grave; till, ordering a grated door to be thrown open, the light of our flambeaux fell upon a flight of most beautiful marble steps, polished as a mirror, leading down between walls of the rarest jaspers to a portal of no great size, but enriched with balusters of rich bronze, sculptured architraves, and tablets of inscriptions, in a style of the greatest magnificence.

As I descended the steps, a gurgling sound, like that of a rivulet, caught my ear. "What means this?" said I. "It means," answered the monk, "that the sepulchral cave on the left of the stairs, where repose the bodies of many of our Queens and Infantas, is properly ventilated, running water

being excellent for that purpose." I went on, not lulled by these rippling murmurs, but chilled when I reflected through what precincts flows this river of death.

Arrived at the bottom of the stairs, we passed through the portal just mentioned, and entered a circular saloon, not more than five-and-thirty feet in diameter, characterized by extreme elegance, not stern solemnity. The regal sarcophagi, rich in golden ornaments, ranged one above the another, forming panels of the most decorative kind; the lustre of exquisitely sculptured bronze, the pavement of mottled alabaster: in short, this graceful dome, covered with scrolls of the most delicate foliage, appeared to the eye of my imagination more like a subterranean boudoir, prepared by some gallant young magician for the reception of an enchanted and enchanting princess, than a temple consecrated to the king of terrors.

My conductors' visage growing longer and longer every minute, and looking pretty nearly as grim as that of the last-mentioned sovereign, I whispered Roxas it was full time to take our leave; which we did immediately after my intimating that express desire, to the no small satisfaction, I am perfectly convinced, of my lord the Prior.

Cold and hungry, for we had not been offered a morsel of refreshment, we repaired to a warm opulent-looking habitation belonging to one of my kind companion's most particular friends, a much-favoured attendant of his Catholic Majesty's: here we were received with open arms and generous hospitality; and it grew pitch-dark before we quitted this comfortable shelter from the piercing winds which blow almost perpetually over the Escurial, and returned to Madrid.

LETTER XII.

The mules galloped back at so rapid a rate, and their conductors bawled and screamed so lustily to encourage their exertions, that half my recollections of the Escurial were whirled out of my head before I reached my old quarters at the Cruz de Malta. I had quite forgotten, amongst other things, that I had actually accepted a most pressing invitation to a concert and ball at Pacheco's this very evening.

Pacheco is an old Portuguese, immensely rich, and who had

been immensely favoured in the days of his youth by his august countrywoman, Queen Barbara, the consort of Ferdinand the Sixth, and the patroness of Farinelli. He is uncle to Madame Arriaga, her Most Faithful Majesty's most faithful and favourite attendant, and a person of such worship, that courtiers, ministers, and prelates are too happy to congregate at his house whenever he takes it into his head to allow them an opportunity.

Though I had been half petrified by my cold ramble through the Escurial, under the Prior's still more chilling auspices, I had quite life enough left to obey Pacheco's summons with alacrity; and, as I expected to dance a great deal, I put on my dancing-dress, that of a maxo, with ties and tags, and trimmings and buttons, redecilla and all.

I must confess, however, that I felt rather abashed and disappointed, upon entering Pacheco's long pompous gallery, to find myself in the midst of diplomatic and ministerial personages, assembled in stiff gala to do honour to Achmet Vassif, whose musicians were seated on the carpet howling forth a deplorable ditty, composed, as the Armenian interpreter informed me, by one of the most impassioned and love-sick dilettantes of the East; no strain I ever heard was half so lugubrious, not even that of a dog baying the moon, or owls making their complaints to it.

I could not help telling the Ambassador, without the smallest circumlocution, that his tabor and pipe people I heard the other day accompanying a dulcimer, were far more worthy of praise than his vocal attendants: but this truth, like most others, did not exactly please; and I fear my reputation for musical connoisseurship was completely forfeited in his excellency's estimation, for he looked a little glum upon the occasion. What surprised me most, after all, was the patience with which the whole assembly listened for full three-quarters of an hour to these languorous wailings.

Amongst the audience, none bore the severe infliction with a greater degree of evangelical resignation than the Grand Inquisitor and the Archbishop of Toledo; both these prelates have not only the look, but the character of beneficence, which promises a truce to the fagot and pitch-barrel; the expression of the Archbishop's countenance in particular is most engagingly mild and pleasing. He came up to me without the least reserve or formality, and taking me by the hand, said with a cheerful

smile, "I see you are equipped for a dance, and have adopted our fashion; we all long to judge whether an Englishman can enter (as I hear you can) into the extravagant spirit of our national dances. I will speak to Pacheco, and desire him to form a diversion in your favour, by calling off these doleful minstrels to the rinfresco prepared for them." And so he did, and there was an end of the concert, to my infinite joy, and the no less delight of the Villa Mayors and Sabbatinis, with whom, without a moment's further delay, I sprang forth in a bolero.

Down came all the Spanish musicians from their formal orchestra, too happy to escape its trammels; away went the foreign regulars, taking vehement pinches of snuff, with the most unequivocal expressions of anger and indignation. A circle was soon formed, a host of guitars put in immediate requisition, and never did I hear such wild, extravagant, passionate modulations.

Boccharini, who led and presided over the Duchess of Ossuna's concerts, and who had been lent to Pacheco as a special favour, witnessed these most original deviations from all established musical rule with the utmost contempt and dismay. He said to me in a loud whisper, "If *you* dance and *they* play in this ridiculous manner, I shall never be able to introduce a decent style into our musical world here, which I flattered myself I was on the very point of doing. What possesses you? Is it the devil? Who could suppose that a reasonable being, an Englishman of all others, would have encouraged these inveterate barbarians in such absurdities. There's a chromatic scream! there's a passage! We have heard of robbing time; this is murdering it. What! again! Why, this is worse than a convulsive hiccup, or the last rattle in the throat of a dying malefactor. Give me the Turkish howlings in preference; they are not so obtrusive and impudent."

So saying, he moved off with a semi-seria stride, and we danced on with redoubled delight and joy. The quicker we moved, the more intrepidly we stamped with our feet, the more sonorously we snapped our fingers, the better reconciled the sublime Effendi appeared to be with me. He forgot my critiques upon his vocal performers: he rose up from his snug cushion, and nodded his turbaned head, and expressed his delight, not only by word and gesture, but in a most comfortable

Orientalish sort of chuckling. As to the rest of the company, the Spanish part at least, they were so much animated, that not less than twenty voices accompanied the bolero with its appropriate words in full chorus, and with a glow of enthusiasm that inspired my lovely partners and myself with such energy, that we outdid all our former outdancings.

"Is it possible," exclaimed an old fandango-fancier of great notoriety—"is it possible, that a son of the cold north can have learnt all our rapturous flings and stampings?"—"The French never *could*, or rather never *would*," observed a Monsieur Gaudin, one of the Duke de la V——'s secretaries, who was standing by perfectly astounded.

Who persecute like renegades? who are so virulent against their former sect as fresh converts to another? This was partly my case; though my dancing and musical education had been strictly orthodox, according to the precepts of Mozart and Sacchini, of Vestris and Gardel, I declared loudly there was no music but Spanish, no dancing but Spanish, no salvation in either art out of the Spanish pale, and that, compared with such rapturous melodies, such inspired movements, the rest of Europe afforded only examples of dulness and insipidity. I would not allow my former instructors a spark of merit; and at the very moment I was committing solecisms in good dancing at every step, and stamping and piaffing like a courser but half-broken in at a manége, I felt and looked as firmly persuaded of the truth of my impudent assertions as the greatest bigot of his nonsense in some untried new-fangled superstition. Success, founded or unfounded, is everything in this world. We too well know the sad fate of merit. I am more than apt to conjecture we were but very slightly entitled to any applause; yet the transports we called forth were as fervid as those the famous Le Pique excited at Naples in the zenith of his popularity.

The British and American Ministers, who were standing by the whole time, enjoyed this amusing proof of Spanish fanaticism, in its profane mood, with all the zest of intelligent and shrewd observers. Pisani, the Venetian Ambassador, inclined decidedly to the southern side of the question. He was bound, heart and soul, by a variety of silken ties to the Spanish interest, and had almost forgotten the fascinations of Venice in those of Andalusia. Consequently I had his vote in my

favour. Not so that of the Duchess of Ossuna, Boccharini's patroness. She said to me in the plainest language, "You are making the greatest fool of yourself I ever beheld; and as to those riotous self-taught hoydens, your partners, I tell you what, they are scarcely worthy to figure in the third rank at a second-rate theatre. Come along with me, and I will present you to my mother, the Countess of Benevente, who gives a very different sort of education to the charming young women she admits to her court."

I had heard of this court and its delectabilities, and at the same time been informed that its throne was a faro table, to which the initiated were imperatively expected to become tributaries. The sovereign, old Benevente, is the most determined hag of her rout-giving, card-playing species in Europe, of the highest birth, the highest consequence, and the principal disposer, by long habit and old cortejo-ship, of Florida Blanca's good graces.

Notwithstanding the severe regulations against gambling societies, most severely enforced at Madrid; notwithstanding the Prime Minister's morality, and the still higher morality of his royal master, this great lady's aberrations of every kind are most complaisantly winked at; she is allowed not only to set up under her own princely roof a refuge for the desolate, in the most delicate style of Spanish refinement, for the kind purpose of enchanting all persons sufficiently favoured by fortune to merit admission to her parties, by every blandishment and languishment the most seductive eyes of Seville and Cadiz she had collected together could throw around them; but so sure as the hour of midnight arrived, and Florida Blanca (who never fails paying his devoirs to the Countess every evening) had made his retiring bow, so sure a confidential party of illuminati, of unsleeping partners in the gambling line, made their appearance, heavily laden with well-stored caskets.

Now came the tug of play, and hope, and fear in all their thrilling and throbbing alternations; but, to say truth, I was so completely jaded and worn-out that I partook of neither, and was too happy, after losing almost unconsciously a few dobras, to be allowed to retire; old Benevente calling out to me, with the croak of a vulture scenting its prey from afar, *Cavallero Inglez, a mañana a la misma hora.*

LETTER XIII.

Monday, December 24th, 1787.—I shall have the megrims for want of exercise, like my friend Achmet Vassif, if I don't alter my way of life. This morning I only took a listless saunter in the Prado, and returned early to dinner, with a very slight provision of fresh air in my lungs. Roxas was with me, hurrying me out of all appetite that I might see the palace by daylight; and so to the palace we went, and it was luckily a bright ruddy afternoon, the sun gilding a grand confusion of mountainous clouds, and chequering the wild extent of country between Madrid and the Escurial with powerful effects of light and shade.

I cannot praise the front of the palace very warmly. In the centre of the edifice starts up a whimsical sort of turret, with gilt bells, the vilest ornament that could possibly have been imagined. The interior court is of pure and classic architecture, and the great staircase so spacious and well-contrived that you arrive almost imperceptibly at the portal of the guard-chamber. Every door-case and window-recess of this magnificent edifice gleams with the richest polished marbles: the immense and fortress-like thickness of the walls, and double panes of the strongest glass, exclude the keen blasts which range almost uninterrupted over the wide plains of Castile, and preserve an admirable temperature throughout the whole extent of these royal rooms, the grandeur, and at the same time comfort, of which cannot possibly be exceeded.

The King, the Prince of Asturias, and the chief part of their attendants, were all absent hunting in the park of the Escurial; but the reposteros, or curtain-drawers of the palace, having received particular orders for my admittance, I enjoyed the entire liberty of wandering about unrestrained and unmolested. Roxas having left me to join a gay party of the royal body-guard in Masserano's apartments, I remained in total solitude, surrounded by the pure unsullied works of the great Italian, Spanish, and Flemish painters, fresh as the flowers of a parterre in early morning, and many of them as beautiful in point of hues.

Not a door being closed, I penetrated through the chamber of the throne even into the old King's sleeping-apartment,

which, unlike the dormitory of most of his subjects, is remarkable for extreme neatness. A book of pious orisons, with engravings by Spanish artists, and containing, amongst other prayers in different languages, one adapted to the exclusive use of Majesty, *Regi solo proprius*, was lying on his praying-desk; and at the head of the richly-canopied, but uncurtained bed, I noticed with much delight an enamelled tablet by Mengs, representing the infant Saviour appearing to Saint Anthony of Padua.

In this room, as in all the others I passed through, without any exception, stood cages of gilded wire, of different forms and sizes, and in every cage a curious exotic bird, in full song, each trying to out-sing his neighbour. Mingled with these warblings was heard at certain intervals the low chime of musical clocks, stealing upon the ear like the tones of harmonic glasses. No other sound broke in any degree the general stillness, except, indeed, the almost inaudible footsteps of several aged domestics, in court-dresses of the cut and fashion prevalent in the days of the King's mother, Elizabeth Farnese, gliding along quietly and cautiously to open the cages, and offer their inmates such dainties as highly-educated birds are taught to relish. Much fluttering and cowering down ensued in consequence of these attentions, and much rubbing of bills and scratching of polls on my part, as well as on that of the smiling old gentlemen.

As soon as the ceremony of pampering these feathered favourites had been most affectionately performed, I availed myself of the light reflected from a clear sunset to examine the pictures, chiefly of a religious cast, with which these stately apartments are tapestried; particularly the Madonna del Spasimo, that vivid representation of the blessed Virgin's maternal agony, when her divine Son, fainting under the burthen of the cross, approached to ascend the mount of torture, and complete the awful mystery of redemption. Raphael never attained in any other of his works such solemn depth of colour, such majesty of character, as in this triumph of his art. "Never was sorrow like unto the sorrow" he has depicted in the Virgin's countenance and attitude; never was the expression of a sublime and God-like calm in the midst of acute suffering conveyed more closely home to the human heart than in the face of Christ.

I stood fixed in the contemplation of this holy vision—for such I almost fancied it to be—till the approaching shadows of night had overspread every recess of these vast apartments: still I kept intensely gazing upon the picture. I knew it was time to retire,—still I gazed on. I was aware that Roxas had been long expecting me in Masserano's apartments,—still I could not snatch myself away; the Virgin mother with her outstretched arms still haunted me. The song of the birds had ceased, as well as the soft diapason of the self-playing organs;—all was hushed, all tranquil. I departed at length with the languid unwillingness of an enthusiast exhausted by the intensity of his feelings and loth to arouse himself from the bosom of grateful illusions.

Just as I reached the portal of the great stairs, whom should I meet but Noronha advancing towards me with a hurried step. "Where are you going so fast?" said he to me, "and where have you been staying so long? I have been sending repeatedly after you to no purpose. You must come immediately to the Infanta and Don Gabriel; they want to ask you a thousand questions about the Ajuda: the letters you brought them from Marialva, and the Archbishop in particular, have, I suppose, inspired that wish; and as royal wishes, you know, cannot be too speedily gratified, you must kiss their hands this very evening. I am to be your introductor."—"What!" said I, "in this unceremonious dress?"—"Yes," said the Ambassador; "I have heard that you are not a pattern of correctness in these matters." I wished to have been one in this instance. At this particular moment I was in no trim exteriorly or interiorly for courtly introductions. I thought of nothing but birds and pictures, and had much rather have been presented to a cockatoo than to the greatest monarch in Christendom.

However, I put on the best face I was able, and we proceeded together very placidly to that part of the palace assigned to Don Gabriel and his blooming bride. The doors of a coved antechamber flew open, and after passing through an enfilade of saloons peopled with ladies-in-waiting and pages (some mere children), we entered a lofty chamber hung with white satin, formed into compartments by a rich embroidery of gold and colours, and illuminated by a lustre of rock crystal.

At the farther extremity of the apartment stood the Infant Don Gabriel, leaning against a table covered with velvet, on

which I observed a case of large golden antique medals he was in the very act of contemplating: the Infanta was seated near. She rose up most graciously to hold out a beautiful hand, which I kissed with unfeigned fervour: her countenance is most prepossessing; the same florid complexion, handsome features, and open exhilarating smile which distinguishes her brother the Prince of Brazil.

"Ah," said her Royal Highness with great earnestness, "you have then lately seen my dear mother, and walked perhaps in the little garden I was so fond of; did you notice the fine flowers that grow there? particularly the blue carnation; we have not such flowers at Madrid; this climate is not like that of Portugal, nor are our views so pleasant; I miss the azure Tagus, and your ships continually sailing up it; but, when you write to your friend Marialva and the Archbishop, tell them I possess what no other prospect upon earth can equal, the smiles of an adored husband."

The Infant now approached towards me with a look of courteous benignity that reminded me strongly of the Bourbons, nor could I trace in his frank kindly manner the least leaven of Austrian hauteur or Spanish starchness. After inquiring somewhat facetiously how the Duke d'Alafoens and the Portuguese academicians proceeded on their road to the temple of fame, he asked me whether our universities continued to be the favoured abode of classical attainments, and if the books they printed were as correct and as handsome now as in the days of the Stuarts; adding, that his private collection contained some copies which had formerly belonged to the celebrated Count of Oxford. This was far too good an opportunity of putting in a word to the praise and glory of his own famous translation of Sallust, to be neglected; so I expressed everything he could have wished to hear upon the subject.

"You are very good," observed his Royal Highness; "but, to tell you the truth, it was hard work for me. I began it, and so I went on, and lost many a day's wholesome exercise in our parks and forests: however, such as it is, I performed my task without any assistance, though you may perhaps have heard the contrary."

It was now Noronha's turn to begin complimenting, which he did with all the high court mellifluence of an accredited family ambassador: whether, indeed, the Infant received as

gospel all the fine things that were said to him I won't answer, but he looked even kinder and more gracious than at our first entrance. The Infanta recurred again and again to the subject of the Ajuda, and appeared so visibly affected that she awakened all my sympathies; for I, too, had left those behind me on the banks of the Tagus for whom I felt a fond and indelible regard. As we were making our retiring bows, I saw tears gathering in her eyes, whilst she kept gracefully waving her hand to bid us a happy night.

The impressions I received from this interview were not of a nature to allow my enjoying with much vivaciousness the next scene to which I was transported—the headquarters of Masserano, whom I found in unusually high spirits, surrounded by a train of gay young officers, rapping out the rankest Castilian oaths, quaffing their flowing cups of champagne and val de peñas, and playing off upon each other not exactly the most decorous specimens of practical wit.

Roxas looked rather abashed at so unrefined an exhibition of national manners: Noronha had taken good care to keep aloof, and I regretted not having followed his example.

LETTER XIV.

It is not at every corner of life that we stumble upon an intrinsically singular character: to day, however, at Noronha's, I fell in with a Saxon Count,* who justly answers to that description. This man is not only thoroughly imbued with the theoretical mysticism of the German school, but has most firmly persuaded himself, and hundreds besides, that he holds converse with the souls of the departed. Though most impressive and even extravagant upon this subject when started, he proves himself a man of singular judgment upon most others; is a good geometrician, an able chymist, a mineralogist of no ordinary proficiency, and has made discoveries in the art of smelting metals which have been turned already to use-

* He resided afterwards at Paris in a diplomatic character, and is supposed to have been implicated in some of the least amiable events of the revolution. A mysterious passage in the first volume of Soulavie's Memoirs is said to refer to him. He was particularly intimate with citizen Egalité.

ful purpose. Yet nothing can beat out of this cool reflective head, that magical operations may be performed to evident effect, and the devil most positively evocated.

I thought, at first sight, there was a something uncouth and ghostly in his appearance, that promised strange communications; he has a careworn look, a countenance often convulsed with apparently painful twitches, and a lofty skull, set off with bristling hair, powdered as white as Caucasus.

Notwithstanding I by no means courted his acquaintance, he was resolved to make up to me, and dissipate, by the smoothest address he could assume, any prejudices his uncommon cast of features might have inspired. Drawing his chair close to mine, whilst Noronha and his party were busily engaged at voltarete, he tried to allure my attention by throwing out hints of the wonders within reach of a person born under the smile of certain constellations: that I was the person he meant to insinuate, I have little doubt. Having heard that fortune had conferred upon me some few of her golden gifts, he thought, perhaps, that I might be *fused* to advantage, like any other lump of the precious metals. Be his motives what they may, he certainly took as many pains to wind himself into my good opinion as if I had actually been the prime favourite of a planet, or a distant cousin by some diabolical intermarriage, in the style of one of the Plantagenet matches, of old Beelzebub himself.

After a good deal of conversation upon different subjects, chiefly of a sombrous nature, happening to ask him if he had known Schröffer, the most renowned ghost-seer in all Germany, —"Intimately well," was his reply; "a bold young man, not so free, alas! from sensual taint as the awful career he had engaged in demanded,—he rushed upon danger unprepared, at an unhallowed moment—his fate was terrible. I passed a week with him not six months before he disappeared in the frightful manner you have heard of; it was a week of mental toil and suffering, of fasts and privations of various natures, and of sights sufficiently appalling to drive back the whole current of the blood from the heart. It was at this period that, returning one dark and stormy night from trying experiments upon living animals, more excruciating than any the keenest anatomist ever perpetrated, I found lying upon my chair, coiled up in a circle like the symbol of eternity, an

enormous snake of a deadly lead colour; it neither hissed nor moved for several minutes: during this pause, whilst I remained aghast looking full upon it, a voice more like the whisper of trees than any sound of human utterance, articulated certain words, which I have retained, and used to powerful effect in moments of peril and extreme urgency."

I shall not easily forget the strange inquisitive look he gave me whilst making this still stranger communication; he saw my curiosity was excited, and flattered himself he had made upon me the impression he meditated; but when I asked, with the tone of careless levity, what became of the snake on the cushion, after the voice had ceased, he shook his white locks somewhat angrily, and croaked forth with a formidable German accent, "Ask no more—ask no more—you are not in a disposition at present sufficiently pure and serious to comprehend what I *might* disclose. Ask no more."—For this time at least I most implicitly obeyed him.

Promising to call upon me and continue our conversation any day or hour I might choose to appoint, he glided off so imperceptibly, that, had I been a little more persuaded of the possibility of supernatural occurrences, I might have believed he had actually vanished. "A good riddance," said Noronha; "I don't half like that man, nor can I make out why Florida Blanca is so gracious to him."—"I rather suspect he is a spy upon us all," observed the Sardinian Ambassadress, who made one of the voltarete party; "and though he guessed right about the winning card last night at the Countess of Benevente's, I am determined not to invite him to dinner again in a hurry."

LETTER XV.

Sunday, January 13th, 1788.—Kauffman * accompanied me to the Prado this morning, where we met Madame Bendicho and her faithful Expilly (a famous tactician in war or peace), who told me that somebody I thought particularly interesting was not far off. This intelligence imparted to me such animation, that Kauffman was obliged to take long strides to equal my pace. I traversed the whole Prado without meeting the object of my

* A nephew of the famous Angelica, and no indifferent painter himself.

pursuit, and found myself almost unconsciously in the court before the ugly front of the church of Atocha. A tide of devotees carried us into the chapel of the Virgin, which is hung round with trophies and ex-votos, legs, arms, and fingers, in wax and plaster.

Kauffman is three parts an infidel in the German style, but I advised him to kneel with something like Castilian solemnity, and hear out a mass which was none of the shortest; the priest being old, and much given to the wiping and adjusting of spectacles, a pair of which, uncommonly large and lustrous, I thought he would never have succeeded in fitting to his nose.

We happened to kneel under the shade of some banners which the British lion was simple enough to let slip out of his paws during the last war. The colours of fort St. Philip dangled immediately above my head. Amongst the crowd of Our Lady's worshippers I espied one of the gayest of my ball-room acquaintances, the young Duke of Arion, looking like a strayed sheep, and smiting his breast most piteously.

A tiresome Salve Regina being ended, I measured back my steps to the Prado, and at length discovered the person of all others I wished most to see, strictly guarded by mamma. I accompanied them to their door, and returned loiteringly and lingeringly home, where I found Infantado, who had been waiting for me above half-an-hour. With him I rode out on the Toledo road to see a pompous bridge, or rather viaduct; for the river it spans, even in this season, is scarcely copious enough to turn the model of a mill-wheel, much less the reality.

From this spot we went to a villa lately purchased by the Duchess of Alba, and which, I was told, Rubens had once inhabited. True enough, we found a conceited young French artist in the arabesque and cupid line, busily employed in pouncing out the last memorials in this spot of that great painter; reminiscences of favourite pictures he had thrown off in fresco, upon what appeared a rich crimson damask ground. Yes, I witnessed this vandalish operation, and saw large flakes of stucco imprinted with the touches of Rubens fall upon the floor, and heard the wretch who was perpetrating the irreparable act sing, "Veillons, mes sœurs, veillons encorre," with a strong Parisian accent, all the while he was slashing away.

My sweet temper was so much ruffled by this spectacle,

that I begged to be excused any further excursion, and returned home to dress and compose myself, while Infantado went back to his palace. I soon joined him, having been invited to dine with his right virtuous and estimable papa. Thank heaven, the rage for Frenchified decoration has not yet reached this plain but princely abode, which remains in noble Castilian simplicity, with all its famed pictures untouched and uncontaminated.

As soon as the old Duke had retired to his evening's devotions, we hurried to the French Ambassador's ball, where I met fewer saints than sinners, and saw nothing particularly edifying, except the semi-royal race of the Medina Celis dancing "high and disposedly." Cogolhudo, the heir-apparent of this great house, is a good-natured, busy personage; but his illustrious consort, who has been recently appointed to the important office of Camerara-mayor, or mistress of the robes to the image of Our Lady of La Soledad, is a great deal less kindly and affable.*

LETTER XVI.

Sunday, 23rd.—Every morning I have the pleasure of supplying the Grand Seignor's representative with rolls and brioche, baked at home for my breakfast; and this very day he came himself in one of the King's lumbering state coaches, with some of his special favourites, to thank me for these piping-hot attentions. We had a great deal of conversation about the marvels of London, though he seemed stoutly convinced that in every respect Istembul exceeded it ten times over.

As soon as he moved off, I strolled to the gardens of the Buen Retiro, which contains neither statues nor fountains worth describing. They cover a vast extent of sandy ground, in which there is no prevailing upon anything vegetable or animal to thrive, except ostriches, a troop of which were striding about in high spirits, apparently as much at home as in their own native parched-up deserts.

Roxas dined with us, and we went together in the evening

* I have seen a beautiful portrait, engraved by Selma, of this image, and dedicated in due form to its first lady of the dressing-room, Marchioness of Cogolhudo, Duchess of San Estévan, etc.

to the French Ambassador's, the Duke de la V——. His daughter, a fine young woman of eighteen or nineteen, is married to the Prince de L——, a smart stripling, who has scarcely entered his fifteenth year. The Ambassador is no trifling proficient in political intrigue, no commonplace twister and turner in the paths of diplomacy, looks about him with calm and polished indifference, though full of hazardous schemes and projects; ever in secret ferment, and a Jesuit to the heart's core. I could not help noticing his quiet, observing eye—the still eye of a serpent lying perdue in a cave. In his address and manners he is quite a model of high-bred ease, without the slightest tincture of pedantry or affectation.

Madame la Duchesse is a great deal fonder of fine phrases, which she does not always reserve for grand occasions. Their son, the Prince de C——, amused me beyond bounds with his lightning-like flashes of wit and merriment, at the expense of Madrid and its tertullias. Upon the whole, I like this family very much, and ardently wish they may like me.

I could not stay with them so long as I desired, Roxas having promised to present me to Madame d'Aranda, whose devoted friend and *cortejo* he has the consummate pleasure to be. Happy the man who has the good fortune of being attached by such delicious, though not quite strictly sacred ties, to so charming a little creature; but in general the state of cortejo-ism is far from enviable. You are the sworn victim of all the lady's caprices, and can never move out of the rustle of her black silk petticoats, or beyond the wave of her fan, without especial permission, less frequently granted with complacence than refused with asperity. I imagine she has very good-naturedly given him leave of absence to show me about this royal village, or else I should think he would hardly venture to spare me so much of his company.

We found her sitting *en famille* with her sister, and two young boys her brothers, over a silver brasier in a snug interior apartment hung with a bright valencia satin. She showed me the most pleasing marks of civility and attention; and ordered her own apartments to be lighted up, that I might see its magnificent furniture to advantage. The bed, of the richest blue velvet trimmed with point lace, is beautifully shaped, and placed in a spacious and deep recess hung round with an immense profusion of ample curtains.

I wonder architects and fitters-up of apartments do not avail themselves more frequently of the powers of drapery. Nothing produces so grand and at the same time so comfortable an effect. The moment I have an opportunity I will set about constructing a tabernacle, larger than the one I arranged at Ramalhaô, and indulge myself in every variety of plait and fold that can possibly be invented.

Madame d'Aranda's toilet, designed by Moite the sculptor, and executed by Auguste, is by far the most exquisite *chef-d'œuvre* of the kind I ever saw. Poor thing! she has every exterior delight the pomps and vanities of the world can give; but she is married to a man old enough to be her grandfather, and looks as pale and drooping as a narcissus or lily of the valley would appear if stuck in Abraham's bosom, and continually breathed upon by that venerable patriarch.

After passing a delightful hour in what appeared to me an ethereal sort of fairy-land, we went to a far more earthly abode, that of a Madame Badaan, who is so obliging as to give immense assemblies once or twice a week, in rather confined apartments. This small, but convenient habitation, is no idle or unimportant resort for cortejos off duty, or in search of novel adventures. Several of these disbanded worthies were lounging about in the meantime, quite lackadaisically. There was a blaze of beauty in every corner of the room, sufficient to enchant those the least given to being enchanted; and there frisked the two little Sabatinis, half Spanish, half Italian, sporting their neatly turned ankles; and there sat Madame de Villamayor in all her pride, and her daughters so full of promise; and the Marchioness of Santa Cruz, with her dark hair and blue eyes, in all her loveliness. How delighted my friend, the Effendi, must have been upon entering such a paradise, which he soon did after we arrived there, followed by his Armenian interpreter, whom I like better than the Greek, Timoni, with his prying, squirrelish look, and malicious propensities.

The Ambassador found me out almost immediately, and taking me to an angle of the apartment, where a well-cushioned divan had been prepared for his lollification, made me sit down by him whether I would or not. We were just settled, when a bevy of young tits dressed out in a fantastic, blowzy style, with sparkling eyes and streaming ribbons, drew their chairs round us, and began talking a strange lingua-franca, composed

of three or four different languages. We must have formed a curious group; I was declaiming and gesticulating with all my might, reciting scraps of Hafiz and Mesihi, whilst the ladies, none of the tallest, who were seated on low chairs, kept perking up their pretty little inquisitive faces in the very beard of the stately Moslem, whose solemn demeanour formed an amusing contrast to their giddy vivacity.

Madame Badaan and her spouse, the very best people in the world, and the readiest to afford their company all possible varieties of accommodation, sent for the most famous band of musicians Madrid could boast of, and proposed a dance for the entertainment of his bearded excellency. Accordingly thirteen or fourteen couples started, and boleroed and fandangoed away upon a thick carpet for an hour or two, without intermission. There are scarcely any boarded floors in Madrid, so the custom of dancing upon rugs is universally established.

LETTER XVII.

Tuesday, December 1st, 1795.—It was on a clear bright morning (scarce any frost) that we left a wretched place called Villatoba, falling into ruins like almost all the towns and villages I have seen in Spain. The sky was so transparent, so pearly, and the sunbeams so fresh and reviving, that the country appeared pleasant in spite of its flatness and aridity. Every tree has been cut down, and all chance of their being replaced precluded by the wandering flocks of sheep, goats, and swine, which rout, and grout, and nibble uncontrolled and unmolested.

At length, after a tedious drive through vast tracts of desolate country, scarce a house, scarce a shrub, scarce a human being to meet with, we descended a rapid declivity, and I once more found myself in the valley of Aranjuez. The avenues of poplar and plane have shot up to a striking elevation since I saw them last. The planes on the banks of the Tagus incline most respectfully towards its waters; they are vigorously luxuriant, although planted only seven years ago, as the gardener informed me.

Charles the Fifth's elms in the island-garden close to the palace are decaying apace. I visited the nine venerable

stumps close to a hideous brick-ruin; the largest measures forty or fifty feet in girth; the roots are picturesquely fantastic. The fountains, like the shades in which they are embowered, are rapidly going to decay: the bronze Venus, at the fountain which takes its name from Don John of Austria, has lost her arm.

Notwithstanding the dreariness of the season, with all its accompaniment of dry leaves and faded herbage, this historic garden had still charms; the air was mild, and the sunbeams played on the Tagus, and many a bird flitted from spray to spray. Several long alleys of the loftiest elms, their huge rough trunks mantled with ivy, and their grotesque roots advancing and receding like grotto-work into the walk, struck me as singularly pleasing.

The palace has not been long completed; the additions made by Charles the Third agree not ill with the original edifice. It is a comfortable, though not a magnificent abode; walls thick, windows cheerfully glazed in two panels, neat low chimney-pieces in many of the apartments; few traces of the days of the Philips; scarce any furniture that bespeak an ancient family. A flimsy modern style, half Italian, half French, prevails. Even the pictures are, in point of subjects, preservation, originality, and masters, as strangely jumbled together as in the dominions of an auctioneer. This may be accounted for by their being collected indiscriminately by the present King, whilst Prince of Asturias. Amongst innumerable trash, I noticed a Crucifixion by Mengs; not overburthened with expression, but finely coloured; the background and sky most gloomily portentous, and producing a grand effect of light and shade. The interior of a Gothic church, by Peter Neef, so fine, so clear, so silvery in point of tint, as to reconcile me (for the moment, at least) to this harsh, stiff master; the figures exquisite, the preservation perfect; no varnish, no retouches.

A set of twelve small cabinet pictures, touched with admirable spirit by Teniers, the subjects taken from the Gierusalemme Liberata, treated as familiarly as if the boozy painter had been still copying his pot-companions. Armida's palace is a little round summer-house; she herself, habited like a burgher's frouw in her holiday garments, holds a Nuremberg-shaped looking-glass up to the broad vulgar face of a boorish

Rinaldo. The fair Naiads, comfortably fat, and most invitingly smirkish, are naked to be sure, but a pile of furbelowed garments and farthingales is ostentatiously displayed on the bank of the water; close by a small table covered with a neat white tablecloth, and garnished with silver tankards, cold pie, and salvers of custard and jellies. All these vulgar accessories are finished with scrupulous delicacy.

Several oratories open into the royal apartments. One set apart for the Queen is adorned with a very costly, and at the same time beautiful altar, rich, simple, and majestic; not an ornament is lavished in vain. Two Corinthian columns, of a most beautiful purple and white marble, sustain a pediment, as highly polished and as richly mottled as any agate I ever beheld; the capitals are bronze splendidly gilt, so is the foliage of the consoles supporting the slab which forms the altar. The design, the materials, the workmanship, are all Spanish, and do the nation credit.

The King's oratory is much larger, and not ill-designed; the proportion is good, about twenty-six by twenty-two, and twenty-four high, besides a solemn recess for the altar: the walls entirely covered with fresco-painting; saints, prophets, clouds, and angels, in grand confusion. The sides of the arch, and all the frame of the altar-piece, are profusely and solidly gilt. A plinth of jasper, and a skirting about three feet high, of a light-grey marble streaked with black, not unlike the capricious ramifications on mocho-stones, and polished as a mirror, is continued round the room, so that nothing meets the eye but the rich gleam of gold, painting, and marble, all blended together in one glowing tint. The pavement, too, of different Spanish marbles, is a *chef-d'œuvre* of workmanship. I particularly admired the soft ivory-hue of the white marble, but my conductor allowed it little merit when compared with that of Italy: I think him mistaken in this remark, and heartily wish him so in many others.

This conductor, an old snuffling domestic of the late King, was rather forward in making his remarks upon times present. A sort of Piedmontese in my train, I believe the master of the fonda where I lodge, pointing to a *manége* now building, asked for whom it was designed, the King or the Duke d'Alcudia? "For both, no doubt," was the answer; "what serves one serves the other." In the royal tribune, I was in-

formed, with a woeful shrug, that the King, thank God! continued to be exact and fervent in his devotions; never missing mass a single day, and frequently spending considerable time in mental prayer; but that the Queen was scandalously remiss, and seldom appeared in the chapels, except when some slender remains of etiquette render her presence indispensable.

The chapel, repaired after designs of Sabbatini, an old Italian architect, much in favour with Charles the Third, has merit, and is remarkable for the just distribution of light, which produces a solemn religious effect. The three altars are noble, and their paintings good. One in particular, on the right, dedicated to St. Anthony, immediately attracted my attention by the effulgence of glory amidst which the infant Jesus is descending to caress the kneeling saint, whose attitude, and youthful, enthusiastic countenance, have great expression. The colouring is warm and harmonious; Maella is the painter.

I inquired after a remarkable room in this palace, called in the plan *Salon de los Funciones*, and vulgarly *el Coliseo*. The ceiling was painted by Mengs, and esteemed one of his capital works: here Ferdinand and Barbara, the most musical of sovereigns, used to melt in ecstasies at the soft warblings of Farinelli and Egiziello—but, alas! the scene of their amusements, like themselves and their warblers, is no more. Not later than last summer, this grand theatrical apartment was divided into a suite of shabby, bandboxical rooms for the accommodation of the Infant of Parma. No mercy was shown to the beautiful roof. In some places, legs and folds of drapery are still visible; but the workmen are hammering and plastering at a great rate, and in a few days whitewash will cover all.

Coming out of the palace, and observing how deserted and melancholy the walks, garden, and avenues appeared, I was told that in a few weeks a total change would take place, for the court was expected on the 6th of January, to remain six months, and that every pleasure followed in its train,—shoals of gamblers, and ladies of easy virtue of all ranks, ages, and descriptions. Every barrier which Charles the Third, of chaste and pious memory, attempted to oppose to the wanton inclinations of his subjects, has been broken down in the present reign; boundless freedom of conduct prevails, and the most

disgusting debauchery riots in these lovely groves, which deserve to be set apart for elegant and rural pleasures.

In my walks I passed a huge edifice lately built for the favourite Alcudia. Common report accuses it of being more magnificently furnished than the royal residence; but, as I did not enter it, I shall content myself with noting down, that it boasts nineteen windows in front, and a plain Tuscan portal with handsome granite pillars. Adjoining is a house belonging to the Duchess of Ossuna, full of workmen, painters, and stuccadors; a goggle-eyed Milanese, most fiercely conceited, is daubing the walls with all his might and main. He is an architect too, at least I have his word for it, and claims the merit, a great one as he believes, of having designed a sort of ball-room, with many a festoon and Bohemian glass-chandelier and coarse arabesque. The floor is bricked, upon which thick mats or carpets are spread when dancing is going forward.

I was in hopes this tiresome custom of thumping mats and rugs with the feet, to the brisk airs of boleros and fandangos, was exploded. No music is more inspiring than the Spanish; what a pity they refuse themselves the joy of rising a foot or two into the air at every step by the help of elastic boards!

Next to this sort of a ball-room is a sort of an oval boudoir, and then a sort of an octagon; all bad sorts of their kind. This confounded painter is covering the oval with landscapes, not half so harmonious or spirited as those which figure on Birmingham snuff-boxes or tea-boards. He has a terrible partiality to blues and greens of the crudest tints. Such colours affect my eyes as disagreeably as certain sounds my teeth, when set on edge. I pity the Duchess of Ossuna, whose liberal desire of encouraging the arts deserves better artists. In music she has been more fortunate: Boccharini directed her band when I was last at Madrid; and I remember with what transport she heard and applauded the Galli, to whom she sent one morning a present of the most expensive trinkets, carelessly heaped up upon a magnificent salver of massive silver, two or three feet in diameter.

The day closed as I was wandering about the Duchess's mansion, surprised at the slovenly neglect of the furniture, not an article of which has been moved out of the reach of dust, scaffoldings, the exhalations of paint, and the still more pestilential exhalation of garlic-eating workmen. Universal apathy

and indifference to everything seems to pervade the whole Iberian peninsula. If not caring what you eat or what you drink is a virtue, so far the evangelical precept is obeyed. So it is in Portugal, and so it is in Spain, and so it looks likely to be world without end: to which, let the rest of Europe say amen; for were these countries to open their long-closed eyes, cast off their trammels, and rouse themselves to industry, they would soon surpass their neighbours in wealth and population.

LETTER XVIII.

Wednesday, December 2nd, 1795.—It was near eleven before a thick fog, which had arisen from the groves and waters of Aranjuez, dispersed. I took advantage of a bright sunshine to issue forth on horseback, and explore the extremities of the Calle de la Reyna. Most of the ancient elms which compose this noble avenue are dead-topped, many have lost their flourishing heads since I was last here; but on every side innumerable plantations of oak, elm, poplar, and plane, are springing up in all the vigour and luxuriance of youth. I was sorry to see many, very many acres of unmeaning shrubbery, serpentive walks, and clumps of paltry flowers, encroaching upon the wild thickets upon the banks of the Tagus.

The King, the Queen, the favourite, are bitten by the rage of what they fancy to be improvement; and are levelling ground, and smoothing banks, and building rock-work, with pagodas and Chinese railing. The laburnums, weeping-willows, and flowering shrubs, which I admired so much seven years ago in all their native luxuriance, are beginning to be trimmed and tortured into what the gardener calls genteel shapes. Even the course of the Tagus has been thwarted, and part of its waters diverted into a broad ditch in order to form an island; flat, swampy, and dotted over with exotic shrubs, to make room for which many a venerable arbele and poplar has been laid low.

Hard by stands a large brick mansion, just erected, in the dullest and commonest Spanish taste, very improperly called Casa del Labrador. It has nothing rural about it, not even a hen-roost or a hog-sty; but the kitchen is snug and commodious, and to this his Catholic Majesty often resorts, and cooks

with his own royal hands, and for his own royal self, creadillas (alias lamb's fry), garlic-omelets, and other savoury messes, in the national style.

Nothing delights the good-natured monarch so much as a pretence for descending into low life, and creeping out of the sight of his court, his council, and his people; therefore Madrid is almost totally abandoned by him, and many capricious buildings are starting up in every secluded corner of the royal parks and gardens. This last is the ugliest and most unmeaning of all. I recollect being pleased with the casinos he built whilst Prince of Asturias, at the Escurial and the Pardo. His present advisers, in matters of taste, are inferior even to those who direct his political movements; and the workmen, who obey the first, still more unskilful and bungling than the generals, admirals, and engineers, who carry the plans of the latter into execution.

If they would but let Aranjuez alone, I should not care. Nature has lavished her charms most bountifully on this valley; the wild hills which close it in, though barren, are picturesquely shaped: the Tagus here winds along in the boldest manner, overhung by crooked willows and lofty arbeles; now losing itself in almost impervious thickets, now undermining steep banks, laying rocks bare, and forming irregular coves and recesses; now flowing smoothly through vast tracts of low shrubs, aspens, and tamarisks; in one spot edged by the most delicate greensward, in another by beds of mint and a thousand other fragrant herbs. I saw numerous herds of deer bounding along in full enjoyment of pasture and liberty; droves of horses, many of a soft cream colour, were frisking about under some gigantic alders; and I counted one hundred and eighty cows, of a most remarkable size, in a green meadow, ruminating in peace and plenty.

The animal creation at Aranjuez seem, undoubtedly, to enjoy all the blessings of an excellent government. The breed is peculiarly attended to, and no pains or expense spared to procure the finest bulls from every quarter. Cows more beautifully dappled, more comfortably sleek, I never beheld.

If the race of grandees could, by judicious crossing, be sustained as successfully, Spain would not have to lament her present scurvy, ill-favoured generation of nobility. Should they be suffered to dwindle much longer, and accumulate

estates and diseases by eternal intermarriages in the same family, I expect to see them on all-fours before the next century is much advanced in its course. These little men, however, are not without some sparks of a lofty, resolute spirit; very few, indeed, have bowed the knee to the Baal of the present hour, to the image which the King has set up. A train of eager, hungry dependants, picked out of inferior and foreign classes, form the company of the Duke of Alcudia. Notwithstanding his lofty titles, unbounded wealth, solid power, and dazzling magnificence, he is treated by the first class with silent contempt and passive indifference. They read the tale of his illustrious descent with the same sneering incredulity as the patents and decrees which enumerate the services he has done the state. Few instances, perhaps, are upon record of a more steady, persevering contempt of an object in actual power, stamped with every ornament royal favour can devise to give it credit, value, and currency.

A thousand interesting reflections arising from this subject crowded my mind as I rode home through the stately and now deserted alleys of Aranjuez. The weather was growing chill, and the withered leaves began to rustle. I was glad to take refuge by a blazing fire. Money, which procures almost everything, had not failed to seduce the best salads and apples from the royal gardens, admirable butter and good game; so I feasted royally, though I dare say I should have done more so, in the most extensive sense of the word, could some supernatural power or Frenchified revolution have procured me the royal cook. His Majesty, I am assured by those I am far from suspecting of flattery, has real talents for this most useful profession.

The comfortable listlessness which had crept over me was too pleasant to be shaken off, and I remained snug by my fireside the whole evening.

ALCOBAÇA AND BATALHA.

FIRST DAY.

June 3rd, 1794.—The Prince Regent of Portugal, for reasons with which I was never entirely acquainted, took it into his royal head, one fair morning, to desire I would pay a visit to the monasteries of Alcobaça and Batalha, and to name my intimate and particular friends, the Grand Prior of Aviz and the Prior of St. Vincent's, as my conductors and companions. Nothing could be more gracious, and in many respects, more agreeable; still, just at this moment, having what I thought much pleasanter engagements nearer home, I cannot pretend that I felt so much enchanted as I ought to have been.

Upon communicating the supreme command to the two prelates, they discovered not the smallest token of surprise; it seemed they were fully prepared for it. The Grand Prior observed that the weather was dreadfully hot, and the roads execrable: the other prelate appeared more animated, and quite ready for the expedition. I thought I detected in one corner of his lively, intelligent eye, a sparkle of hope that, when returned from his little cruise of observation, the remarks it was likely enough to inspire might lead to more intimate conferences at Queluz, and bring him into more frequent collision with royalty.

As my right reverend companions had arranged not to renounce one atom of their habitual comforts and conveniences, and to take with them their confidential acolytes and secretaries, as well as some of their favourite quadrupeds, we had in the train of the latter-mentioned animals a rare rabble of grooms, ferradors, and mule-drivers. To these my usual followers

being added, we formed altogether a caravan which, camels and dromedaries excepted, would have cut no despicable figure even on the route of Mecca or Mesched-Ali!

The rallying point, the general rendezvous for the whole of this heterogeneous assemblage, was my quinta of San Josè, commanding in full prospect the entrance of the Tagus, crowded with vessels arriving from every country under the heavens, messengers of joy to some, of sorrow to others, but all with expanded sails equally brightening in the beams of the cheerful sun, and scudding along over the blue sparkling waves with equal celerity.

"Here I am, my dear friend," said the Grand Prior to me as I handed him out of his brother the old Marquis of Marialva's most sleepifying dormeuse, which had been lent to him expressly for this *trying* occasion. "Behold me at last" (at last indeed, this being the third put-off I had experienced), "ever delighted with your company, but not so much so with the expedition we are going to undertake."

"I hope it will not turn out so unpleasant after all," was my answer: "for my own part, I quite long to see Alcobaça."

"So do not I," rejoined the Grand Prior; "but let that pass. Is Ehrhart come? is Franchi ready? Has the first secured the medicine-chest he was in such an agony about the other day, and the second the pianoforte he swore he would break to pieces unless it would get into better tune?"

"All safe—all waiting—and dinner too, my dear Lord Prior; and after that, let us get off. No easy matter, by the by, even yet, some of the party being such adepts at dawdling."

Why the Grand Prior should have dreaded the journey so much I really could not imagine, every pain having been taken to make it so easy and smooth. It was settled he should loll in his dormeuse or in my chaise just as he best pleased, and look at nothing calculated to excite the fatigue of reflection; topographical inquiries were to be waived completely, and no questions asked about who endowed such a church or raised such a palace. We were to proceed, or rather creep along, by short and facile stages; stopping to dine, and sup, and repose, as delectably as in the most commodious of homes. Everything that could be thought of, or even dreamed of, for our convenience or relaxation, was to be carried in our train, and nothing left behind but Care and

Sorrow; two spectres, who, had they dared to mount on our shoulders, would have been driven off with a high hand by the Prior of St. Vincent's; than whom a more delightful companion never existed, since the days of those polished and gifted canons and cardinals who formed such a galaxy of talent and facetiousness round Leo the Tenth.

We were absolutely roused from our repast, over which the Prior of St. Vincent's gay animated conversation was throwing its usual brilliance, by a racket and hubbub on the sea-shore that was perfectly distracting. The space between my villa and the sea was entirely blocked up, half the population of Belem having poured forth to witness our departure. The lubberly drivers of the baggage-carts were fighting and squabbling amongst themselves for precedence. One of the most lumbering of these ill-constructed vehicles, laden with a large heavy marquee, had its hind wheels already well buffeted by the waves. At length it moved off; and then burst forth such vociferation and such deafening shouts of "Long live the Prince!" and "Long live the Marialvas, and all their friends into the bargain!"—the Englishman of course included—as I expected would have fixed a headache for life upon the unhappy Grand Prior.

Amongst other noises which gave him no small annoyance, might be reckoned the outrageous snortings and neighings of both his favourite high-pampered chaise-horses, out of compliment to one of my delicate English mares, who was trying to get through the crowd with a most engaging air of sentimental retiring modesty.

Half laughing, and half angry lest some unfortunate kick or plunge might deprive me of her agreeable services, I refrained not from crying out to the Grand Prior, "For pity's sake, let us dawdle and doodle no longer, but drive through this mob if it be possible. You see what a disturbance the glorious fuss which has been making about this journey has occasioned; you see the result of a surfeit of superfluities: really, if we had been setting forth to explore the kingdom of Prester John, or the identical spot where Don Sebastian left his bones (if true it be that the shores of Africa, and not some pet dungeon of King Philip's, received them), we could scarcely have gotten together a grander array of encumbrances. At this rate, we shall have occasion to put our tent in requisition this very

night, unless we defer our journey again, and sleep under my roof at San Josè."

"No, no," said the Prior of St. Vincent's; "we shall sleep at my convent's pleasant quinta of Tojal. I shall set off with my people immediately to prepare for your reception."

The deed followed the word: his attendant muleteers cracked their whips in the most imposing style—his ferradors pushed on—the crowd divided—a passage was cleared; the Grand Prior, ordering his dormeuse to follow, got into my enormous travelling chaise, and by the efforts of six stout mules we soon reached Bemfica.

Beyond this village, a shady lane overhung by elms brought us to Nossa Senhora de Luz; a large pile of buildings in the majestic style which prevailed during the Spanish domination in Portugal, but much shattered by the earthquake. From hence we passed on to Lumiares, through intricate paved roads bordered by aloes, sprouting up to the heíght of ten or twelve feet, in shape and colour not unlike gigantic asparagus.

Lumiares contains a quinta belonging to the Marquess of Anjeja, upon which immense sums have been lavished for the wise purpose of pebbling alleys in quaint Mosaic patterns, red, black, and blue; building colossal reservoirs for gold and silver fish, painting their smooth plastered sides with divers flaming colours, and cutting a steep hill into a succession of stiff terraces, under the sole pretext, one should think, of establishing flights of awkward narrow marble steps to communicate one with the other, for they did not appear to lead to any other part of the garden.

The road from Lumiares to Loures is conducted along a valley, between sloping acclivities variegated by fields of grain and wild shrubby pastures. The soft air of the evening was delightful; and the lowing of herds descending from the hills to slake their thirst after a sultry day, at springs and fountains, full of pastoral charm.

It grew dark when we passed the village of Tojal, and crossing a bridge over the river Trancaõ, entered the woody domain of the Monks of St. Vincent. Lights glimmering at the extremity of an avenue of orange-trees directed us to the house, a low picturesque building, half villa, half hermitage. Our reception was so truly exhilarating, so perfectly all in point of comfort and luxury that the heart of man or even

churchman could desire, that we willingly promised to pass the whole of to-morrow in this cheerful residence, and defer our further progress till the day following.

SECOND DAY.

June 4th.—The sunbeams entering my windows summoned me to enjoy the fresh morning breeze blowing over the uninterrupted mass of foliage which fills up the whole valley belonging to the convent.

After breakfast we walked amongst well-cultivated vegetables, fields of Indian wheat as healthy and vigorous as any that ever flourished in the islands which float about like rafts on the Lake of Mexico, and the most extensive orchards of orange, apricots, and other fruit-trees, perhaps in Portugal. Every inch of ground within this inclosure is turned to the most advantageous account: the oranges alone produce from seven to eight thousand cruzados a year. A very active lay brother has the management of this fortunate spot, and is continually extending its limits over the bare hills in the neighbourhood, many of which are comprised within the domain of the fathers.

The river Trancaõ, which runs through the garden, is diminished to a brook at this season; but that brook is clear, and flows rapidly. Its rocky edges, worn into irregular shapes by winter torrents, bloom with the rose-coloured flowers of the oleander. Their appearance was strikingly beautiful; many of these shrubs had attained the height of fifteen or sixteen feet.

But one of the grandest objects of the vegetable world which ever met my sight is a bay-tree, situated in the thickest part of the orange orchards, above which it towers majestically, clothed with luxuriant boughs that glisten with health and vigour. It consists of about thirty stems, none less than two feet, and some thirty-eight inches in diameter, springing from one root, and rising to the height of sixty-four feet. I loitered away the sultry hours of midday most pleasantly under its deep, fragrant shade.

The Prior had ordered a fishing-party for our amusement; —no great amusement, however, for one who detests the sight of wretched animals, inveigled from their cool aquatic

homes, and cast on a dry bank, gasping for life and distending their jaws in torment. Full often have I fancied what woeful grimaces we children of Adam would be compelled to make, should ever the colossal inhabitants of a superior planet be permitted on some dread day of retribution to drop down on the earth on an angling tour, and fish us out of our element for their dinner or recreation. No want of sport need be apprehended in this case — plenty would bite. Men have in general such wide-open appetites for the objects of their individual pursuit, that, only render the bait sufficiently tempting, and I promise they swallow it, hook and all. So few set any bounds to their voraciousness, that a shark might be chosen President of a Temperance Society with equal justice. Courtesy obliged both the Grand Prior and Doctor Ehrhart, as well as myself, to remain much longer than we wished on the banks of the river, witnessing the joy of the anglers, and the struggles of the expiring fish.

About two, we returned home, through shady alleys of curious citron-trees, collected from every part of the Portuguese dominions on this and on the other side of the ocean, divided by tall canes mantled with vines, which promise, like every plant in this happy inclosure, an abundant produce. The nightingales were singing in the recesses of woods impenetrable to the sun, and at the same time, I am sorry to add, frogs were croaking a deep thorough-bass to this enchanting melody.

We dined late for the sake of devouring the produce of our fishery, prepared by the fishermen themselves — a sort of matelotte, which my famous Simon, the most incomparable of cooks, declared, with a smile of ineffable contempt, was only fit to be placed before persons dying with hunger and cast away on some desolate island.

In the cool of the evening we drove through the village of Tojal to a palace of the Patriarch, containing nothing very remarkable, except a vestibule with a tribune looking into a church. The walls of this gallery are lined with the richest marbles of Spain and Portugal, disposed in panels, and ornamented with an overwhelming profusion of doubly and trebly gilt bronze ornaments, in that style of lavish expenditure carried to such triumphant excess by that most magnificent of modern Solomons, King John the Fifth.

After seeing ourselves reflected on all sides in tablets

innumerable, polished like mirrors, we repaired to an immense parterre — the flattest, the richest in red and yellow flowers, and the most like a Turkey carpet, of any I ever had the vexation of visiting either in Holland or Germany. I was glad to escape from this far-spread expanse of pomposity and dulness, and return to the simple orange thickets of my amiable friend, where I walked till almost midnight, listening to the nightingales, who at length had shamed the frogs to silence.

THIRD DAY.

June 5th.—The first sounds I heard upon awakening this superiorly fine and glowing morning, was not "the charm of early birds," but the obstreperous rattle of a violent altercation, or, in simple truth, a downright squabble which broke out, in the vestibule adjoining my room, between the Grand Prior's secretary and a confidential attendant of my good friend of St. Vincent's.

"You know," said the first-mentioned shrill-voiced consequential personage, "my master is too lazy to stir from his shady quarters whilst the sun shines out in so fierce a manner."

"You know," answered the other, "that we have business of urgency at Alcobaça, and the Prince Regent's command to perform it with the less delay the better."

"You do not pretend," rejoined the secretary, "do you, to force on his excellency whether he will or not?"

"What, does he mean to loiter the whole day in our garden of Eden? Shall we not advance as far as Cadafaiz in the cool of the evening?"

"Not we: his excellency has made up his mind to take his fill of repose, and I am not the man to contradict him."

"Then you are a rebellious fool for your pains, and have forgotten his Royal Highness's express orders.—Go on drinking the waters of Lethe if you dare."

"Va beber," etc.—"Go, drink the filthiest puddle in these orchards," rejoined the waspish and irritated secretary.

Tingle, tingle, tingle, went the Grand Prior's silver bell; off ran the disputants, and out came I into the vast echoing vestibule, opening, by as many glazed doors as there are days in a month, into the orange orchards.

If ever a decent excuse could be offered for perfect laziness, it was to be found in the warm, enervating atmosphere, loaded with perfume, which universally invested this pleasant umbrageous region. No wonder my Lord of Aviz, the most consummate professor of "il dolce far niente" in all Portugal and Algarve to boot, could not be withdrawn from it without infinite reluctance. He could hardly even be persuaded to traverse a short avenue which led to a summer pavilion on the banks of the river, where our morning collation was prepared. The Prior of St. Vincent's had a sort of romantic scheme of having our repast spread out on a little remnant of greensward which the heats had spared, and sitting down to it in the Oriental style; but his illustrious colleague gently intimated a preference to chairs and tables.

In addition to our usual party I found a certain padre, Machado, or Azevedo, or some such name, who had not been long returned from China—nay, from Pekin itself. During his residence at Macao, he had learnt sufficient English from one of the padres of our Canton factory—the chaplain, I suppose —to read Sir William Chambers' most florid essay on Chinese gardening. I asked him how many words of truth there might happen to be in all this luxuriant description? He answered, not in plain English, but in a most delectable jargon, half Chinese sing-song, half lingua-franca, "There be ten-tousand-time-ten-tousand."

"You don't mean to assure me," said I, "that our famous architect's most wonderful account of the magical splendour of Yven-ming-Yven and Tchang-tchung-Yven is not exaggerated?"

"It is not," answered the padre in sound Portuguese, having quitted the straits and shallows of very scanty English for the full flow of his vernacular language: "I have seen greater wonders than he—I have seen in the depth of winter a whole extent of garden warmed by a deliciously mild and scented vapour, and all the trees covered with silken leaves and artificial flowers, and, on a pool of water, as clear and transparent as the sky it reflected, hundreds of gaily-enamelled ducks, formed of metal, swimming by mechanism, and by mechanism opening all their bills and uttering their accustomed sound with their usual volubility, and swallowing the food the eunuchs of the palace cast to them,—ay, and returning it again, to all appearance most happily digested, the Emperor standing by all the

while, laughing at my surprise, and believing himself neither more nor less, I am entirely convinced, than an incarnation of the god Fo!"

"Dreadful!" exclaimed the Grand Prior: "I wonder he has not shared the fate of Nebuchadnezzar!"

"He should have been sent to grass at once," observed the Prior of St. Vincent's.

"That would have been a pity," rejoined the ex-missionary; "for, notwithstanding his Tartarian nonsense about incarnations and such like, and the impossibility I experienced of making him comprehend our own ineffable mysteries, I must declare him to be a wise monarch and an excellent man."

"That is more difficult to believe than all you have told us," observed the Grand Prior, "when we reflect upon the horrid impiety of believing one's self Fo."

"There is no lie in the world people will not believe," replied the missionary, "provided they are often told it by flatterers in whom, for the very reason they ought not, they take delight in placing confidence; and when all the princes of the blood, all the courtiers, and all the mandarins of the different tribunals, are continually pouring forth addresses at the foot of the throne, assuring his Imperial Majesty Kien-Long, that he is the son of Heaven, a god upon earth! what would you have him do?"

"Go to the devil his own way, as there is no other remedy," said our hospitable host with a hearty laugh. "We are to conclude, no doubt, you did your best to bring him round: perhaps you may succeed better another time."—(The padre was on the eve of returning to his mission.)—"And now let us go to mass," continued the Prior, bowing to his excellency of Aviz, "and pray for the Emperor's conversion!"

So to mass they went, and then a-fishing; and the evening of this day was like the morning—all warmth, and chat, and idleness.

FOURTH DAY.

June 6th.—At length it pleased Heaven to inspire the Grand Prior with sufficient resolution to proceed; the last dregs of excuses for loitering being exhausted. The air had become much cooler; and the sun being overcast, we experienced a

first-rate blessing—that of travelling under a canopy of clouds, which had the kindness not to disperse till we passed Al Priate, a château belonging to the Duke d'Alafoens.

This sumptuous abode, with pompous high roofs, and courts, and avenues, as Frenchified as their illustrious master, is placed in a valley which would have been pleasant enough had any other trees except the pale leaden-coloured olive happened to predominate.

After jolting along in rather a convulsive manner for about a league, and receiving many a pinch from my alarmed and nervous companion, we emerged from a chaos of ruts and sandbanks into the great highway which leads to the Caldas through Alhandra, Povos, and Villa Franca.

All these places, not unpleasantly situated on the banks of the Tagus, have quintas, palaces, and fidalgos, as well as their betters; but the country which surrounds them is pretty nearly as flat, and as rich in ditches, sluices, and other means of irrigation, as the environs of Antwerp itself. Her Most Faithful Majesty sometimes resorting to the Caldas, the road is kept in tolerable repair.

At every league, pedestals with vases upon them meet the eye; and at no very distant intervals, architectural fountains, which have not yet entirely forgotten the purpose for which they were erected, and still contrive to dribble out a scanty and turbid stream.

As we approached Carregado, scenes of boundless plenty began to expand themselves; unlimited fields of Turkish corn, fine barley, and black Sicilian wheat, the ears bending to the ground with their weight.

We now abandoned the high-road in order to reach Cadafaiz, another ample domain under the government of our hospitable friend, where we arrived late in the afternoon. There we found ourselves in a most comfortable antiquated mansion, perfectly cool and clean; the floors neatly matted, the tables covered with the finest white linen, and, in bright clear carafes of Venetian glass, the most beautiful carnations I ever met with, even at Genoa in the Durazzo Gardens.

The wide latticed windows of the apartment allotted to me commanded the view of a boundless vineyard in full luxuriant leaf, divided by long broad tracts of thyme and camomile, admirably well kept and nicely weeded. From this immense

sea of green leaves rose a number of plum, pear, orange, and apricot trees; the latter procured by the monks directly from Damascus, and bearing, as I can testify, that most delicious fruit of its kind called "eggs of the sun" by the Persians;—even insects and worms seem to respect it, for no trace could I discover of their having preyed on its smooth glowing rind and surrounding foliage.

Beyond these truly Hesperian orchards, very lofty hills swell into the most picturesque forms, varied by ledges of rock, and completely inclose this calm retirement; wild healthful spots of delicate herbage, which the goats and sheep, whose bells I heard tinkling in the distance, are scarcely more partial to than myself.

How often, contrasting my present situation with the horrid disturbed state of almost every part of the Continent, did I bless the hour when my steps were directed to Portugal! As I sat in the nook of my retired window, I looked with complacency on a roof which sheltered no scheming hypocrites,—on tables, on which perhaps no newspaper had ever been thrown, and on neat white pillows, guiltless of propping up the heads of those assassins of real prosperity—political adventurers. The very air which kept playing around my temples seemed to breathe contentment; it was genially warm, not oppressive, and brought with it the intermingled fragrance of mountain herbs and native flowers.

FIFTH DAY.

June 7th.—Not long after daybreak, whilst all the dews of the morning were still waiting to be dried up, I took a ramble over the hills, and, on one of their level summits, discovered an irregular opening with rude steps leading down to a little cavern hewn out of a pumice rock, blessed with a tinkling spring, and mantled all over with the deliciously-scented flowers of the Lonicera tribe in wild luxuriant profusion,—exactly the sort of grotto described in *Gil Blas* as the resort of Algerine pirates. There I proposed reading my favourite pocket-companions Monteiro and Manoel Maria Bocage, in total solitude, and sharing the deep reveries of these intellectual and Cowley-like poets: but fate denied me the enjoyment

of such dreamy happiness. The sober reality of proceeding on our expedition, and particularly of paying a visit to the Caldas, was enforced by my right reverend conductors.

Having a presentiment that the said Caldas were as hot as the suburbs at least of the infernal regions, I begged and entreated we might not stop at such a close, stifling, unpoetical place, but, after taking refreshment under our tent in the open country, make the best of our way boldly and resolutely to Alcobaça.

"Impossible!" said the Grand Prior. "Possible!" exclaimed the Prior of St. Vincent. The vote of the latter carried it, and we got on three or four leagues at a good round pace; the bells of our mules sounding cheerily, and their drivers singing in chorus, to the surprise, if not delight, of my English grooms and attendants.

Thus far all had gone on, as to road, pretty tolerably; but we had scarcely left the Caldas in arrear about two miles on the right, before "the way was all before us where to choose;" no distinct track for such lumbering carriages as we were burthened with being visible. In attempting to advance, we stuck fast: both the mules and their drivers seemed so sincerely alarmed at the prospect before them, and reduced to such utter despair, that my right reverend fellow-travellers, who most fully sympathised in these not unfounded terrors, determined to call the posse comitatus to our aid. A messenger was despatched for that purpose to a neighbouring village, of which I never suspected the existence, it being completely buried in a deep narrow ravine, not unlike one of those enormous ruts which many people fancy they have discovered in the moon. The messenger soon returned with a very efficient magistrate, and thirty or forty stout well-clothed peasants.

A village Hercules putting his shoulder to the wheel, we got out of this scrape; but it was only to fall into another, and so on from bad to worse till patience itself was exhausted. The day was wearing apace; we had not advanced upon our voyage of discovery at the rate of above three miles in two hours. The carriages laboured and rolled like vessels on a swelling sea after a storm. At length ropes were applied to steady them, deafening shouts of encouragement addressed to men and mules, and in an hour more we were approaching Alcobaça.

The first sight of this regal monastery is very imposing; and

the picturesque, well-wooded, and well-watered village, out of the quiet bosom of which it appears to rise, relieves the mind from a sense of oppression the huge domineering bulk of the conventual buildings inspire.

We had no sooner hove in sight, and we loomed large, than a most tremendous ring of bells of extraordinary power announced our speedy arrival. A special aviso, or broad hint from the Secretary of State, recommending these magnificent monks to receive the Grand Prior and his companions with peculiar graciousness, the whole community, including fathers, friars, and subordinates, at least four hundred strong, were drawn up in grand spiritual array on the vast platform before the monastery to bid us welcome. At their head the Abbot himself, in his costume of High Almoner of Portugal, advanced to give us a cordial embrace.

It was quite delectable to witness with what cooings and comfortings the Lord Abbot of Alcobaça greeted his right reverend brethren of Aviz and St. Vincent's—turtle-doves were never more fondlesome, at least in outward appearance. Preceded by these three graces of holiness, I entered the spacious, massive, and somewhat austere Saxon-looking church. All was gloom, except where the perpetual lamps burning before the high altar diffused a light most solemn and religious (inferior twinkles from side chapels and chantries are not worth mentioning). To this altar my high clerical conductors repaired, whilst the full harmonious tones of several stately organs, accompanied by the choir, proclaimed that they were in the act of adoring the real Presence.

Whilst these devout prostrations were performing, I lost not a moment in visiting the sepulchral chapel, where lie interred Pedro the Just and his beloved Iñez.

The light which reached this solemn recess of a most solemn edifice was so subdued and hazy, that I could hardly distinguish the elaborate sculpture of the tomb, which reminded me, both as to design and execution, of the Beauchamp monument at Warwick, so rich in fretwork and imagery.

Just as I was giving way to the affecting reveries which such an object could not fail of exciting in a bosom the least susceptible of romantic impressions, in came the Grand Priors hand in hand, all three together. "To the kitchen," said they in perfect unison,—"to the kitchen, and that immediately;

you will then judge whether we have been wanting in zeal to regale you."

Such a summons, so conveyed, was irresistible ; the three prelates led the way to, I verily believe, the most distinguished temple of gluttony in all Europe. What Glastonbury may have been in its palmy state, I cannot answer ; but my eyes never beheld in any modern convent of France, Italy, or Germany, such an enormous space dedicated to culinary purposes. Through the centre of the immense and nobly-groined hall, not less than sixty feet in diameter, ran a brisk rivulet of the clearest water, flowing through pierced wooden reservoirs, containing every sort and size of the finest river-fish. On one side, loads of game and venison were heaped up ; on the other, vegetables and fruit in endless variety. Beyond a long line of stoves extended a row of ovens, and close to them hillocks of wheaten flour whiter than snow, rocks of sugar, jars of the purest oil, and pastry in vast abundance, which a numerous tribe of lay brothers and their attendants were rolling out and puffing up into a hundred different shapes, singing all the while as blithely as larks in a corn-field.

My servants, and those of their reverend excellencies the two Priors, were standing by in the full glee of witnessing these hospitable preparations, as well pleased, and as much flushed, as if they had been just returned from assisting at the marriage at Cana in Galilee. "There," said the Lord Abbot, "we shall not starve : God's bounties are great, it is fit we should enjoy them."—(By the by, I thought this allegro, contrasted with the penseroso of scarecrow convents, quite delightful.)—"An hour hence supper will be ready," continued the Lord Abbot, "in the meanwhile, let me conduct you to your apartment ; it has only bare walls, for we learnt of your arrival too late this morning to put up our fine hangings." I found the apartment, which was composed of an anteroom, saloon, and bedchamber, lofty and rather pleasant. Though the walls were naked, the ceiling was gilt and painted, the floor spread with Persian carpets of the finest texture, and the tables in rich velvet petticoats, decked out with superb ewers and basins of chased silver, and towels bordered with point-lace of a curious antique pattern,—a strange mixture of simplicity and magnificence. I had my own bed pitched in one of the spacious alcoves, to the apparent surprise, if not

displeasure, of the monk appointed to give me attendance. However, I made myself very comfortable; took a foot-bath as serenely as if I had been at Abraham's tent-door, and waited in a perfect refreshing calm till three thundering knocks at the outward portal announced the Abbot himself coming to lead me to the banquet-hall.

We passed through a succession of cloisters and galleries, which the shades of evening rendered dimly visible, till we entered a saloon, superb indeed, covered with pictures and lighted up by a profusion of wax tapers in sconces of silver. Right in the centre of this stately room stood a most ample table, covered with fringed embroidered linen, and round it four ponderous fauteuils for the guest and the three prelates; so we formed a very comfortable *partie quarrée*.

The banquet itself consisted of not only the most excellent usual fare, but rarities and delicacies of past seasons and distant countries; exquisite sausages, potted lampreys, strange messes from the Brazils, and others still stranger from China (edible birds' nests and sharks' fins), dressed after the latest mode of Macao by a Chinese lay brother. Confectionery and fruits were out of the question here; they awaited us in an adjoining still more spacious and sumptuous apartment, to which we retired from the effluvia of viands and sauces.

In this apartment we found Franchi and the Grand Prior of Aviz's secretary, the Prior of St. Vincent's acolyte, and ten or twelve principal personages of the neighbourhood, most eager to enjoy a stare at the stranger whom their lordly Abbot delighted to honour. The table being removed, four good-looking novices, lads of fifteen or sixteen, demure even to primness, came in, bearing cassolettes of Goa filigree, steaming with a fragrant vapour of Calambac, the finest quality of wood of aloes.

This pleasing ceremony performed, the saloon was cleared out as if for dancing. I flattered myself we were going to be favoured with a bolero, fandango, or perhaps the fofa itself,—a dance as recent as the ballets exhibited for the recreation of Muley Liezit, his most exemplary Marocchese Majesty. A crowd of clarionet and guitar players, dressed in silk dominos like the serenaders in Italian burlettas, followed by a posse of young monks and young gentlemen in secular dresses as stiff as buckram, began an endless succession of the most decorous

and tiresome minuets I ever witnessed, ten times longer, and alas! ten times less ridiculous, than even the long minuet at Bath.

Tired to death of remaining motionless, and desirous of exhibiting something a little out of the common way, I gently hinted a wish to dance, and that I should have no objection were one of the three right reverend Priors to take me out. It would not do—they kept their state. Yawning piteously, I longed for the hour when it should become lawful to retire to bed; which I did right gladly when the blessed hour came, after good-nighting and being good-nighted with another round of ceremony.

SIXTH DAY.

June 8th.—I rose early, slipped out of my pompous apartment, strayed about endless corridors—not a soul stirring. Looked into a gloomy hall, much encumbered with gilded ornaments, and grim with the ill-sculptured effigies of kings; and another immense chamber, with white walls covered with pictures in black lacquered frames most hideously unharmonious.

One portrait, the full size of life, by a very ancient Portuguese artist named Vasquez, attracted my minute attention. It represented no less interesting a personage than St. Thomas à Becket, and looked the character in perfection;—lofty in stature and expression of countenance; pale, but resolute, like one devoted to death in his great cause; the very being Dr. Lingard has portrayed in his admirable History.

From this chamber I wandered down several flights of stairs to a cloister of the earliest Norman architecture, having in the centre a fountain of very primitive form, spouting forth clear water abundantly into a marble basin. Twisting and straggling over this uncouth mass of sculpture are several orange-trees, gnarled and crabbed, but covered with fruit and flowers, their branches grotesque and fantastic, exactly such as a Japanese would delight in, and copy on his caskets and screens; their age most venerable, for the traditions of the convent assured me that they were the very first imported from China into Portugal. There was some comfort in these objects; every

other in the place looked dingy and dismal, and steeped in a green and yellow melancholy.

On the damp, stained, and mossy walls I noticed vast numbers of sepulchral inscriptions (some nearly effaced) to the memory of the knights slain at the battle of Aljubarota: I gave myself no trouble to make them out, but continuing my solitary ramble, visited the refectory, a square of seventy or eighty feet, be-gloomed by dark-coloured painted windows, and disgraced by tables covered with not the cleanest or least unctuous linen in the world.

I had proceeded thus far, when three venerable fathers, of most grave and solemn aspect, made their appearance; to whom having bowed as lowly as Abraham did to his angelic visitors, I received as many profound obeisances in return, and a summons to breakfast. This I readily obeyed: it wanted three-quarters of eight, and I was as hungry as a stripling novice. The Prior of Aviz having supped too amply the night before, did not appear; but he of St. Vincent's, all kindness and good digestion, did the honours with cordial grace, and made tea as skilfully as the most complete old dowager in Christendom. My Lord of Alcobaça was absent,—engaged, as I was told, and readily believed, upon conventual affairs of urgent importance.

The repast finished, and not soon, our whole morning was taken up with seeing sights, though not exactly the sights I most wished to see. Some MSS. of the fourteenth century, containing, I have been assured, traditional records of Pedro the Just and the Severe, were what I wished for; but they either could not or would not be found; and instead of being allowed to make this interesting research, or having it made for me, we were conducted to a most gorgeous and glistening sacristy, worthy of Versailles itself, adorned with furbelows of gilt bronze, flaunting over panels of jasper and porphyry; copes and vestments, some almost as ancient as the reign of Alfonzo Henriquez, and others embroidered at Rome with gold and pearl, by no means barbaric, were displayed before us in endless succession.

One of the sacristans or treasurers, who happened to have a spice of antiquarianism, guessing the bent of my wishes, produced, from a press or ambery elaborately carved, the identical candlesticks of rock-crystal, and a cross of the same

material, studded with the most delicately-tinted sapphires, which were taken by the victorious John the First from the King of Castile's portable chapel, after the hard-fought conflict of Aljubarota; and several golden reliquaries, as minutely chased and sculptured as any I ever saw at St. Denis, though wrought by St. Eloy's holy hands: one in particular, the model of a cathedral in the style of the Sainte Chapelle at Paris, struck me as being admirable. Ten times at least did I examine and almost worship this highly-wrought precious specimen of early art, and as many times did my excellent friend the Prior of St. Vincent's, who had come in search of me, express a wish that I should not absolutely wear out my eyes or his patience.

"It is growing insufferably warm," said he, "and the hour of siesta arrived; and I cannot help thinking that perhaps it would not be unpleasant for you to retire to your shady chamber: for my part, I can hardly keep my eyes open any longer. But I see this proposal does not suit you —you English are strangely given to locomotion, and I know full well that of all English you are not the least nimble. Here," continued he, calling a young monk, who was sitting by in a nook of the sacristy peeling walnuts, "suspend that important occupation, and be pleased to accompany this fidalgo to any part of your domain he likes to ramble to."

"Right willingly," answered this sprout of holiness: "whither shall we go?"

"Through the village, into the open country, if you have no objection," answered I; "to any point, in short, where I may enjoy rural scenery, trees, and rocks, and running waters."

"Trees, and rocks, and running waters!" re-echoed the monk with a vacant stare. "Had you not better visit our rabbit-warren—the finest in this world? Though, to be sure, the rabbits, poor things! are all asleep at this time of day, and it would be cruel to disturb even them."

This was a broad hint, but I would not take it. The monk, finding I was bent on he could not imagine what pursuit, and that there was no diverting me from it, tucked up his upper garments, shadowed his sleek round face with an enormous straw hat, offered me another of equal size quite new and glossy, and, with staves in our hands, we set forth

like the disciples journeying to Emmaus in some of Polemburg's smooth landscapes. We passed through quadrangles after quadrangles, and courts after courts, till, opening a sly door in an obscure corner, which had proved a convenient sally-port, no doubt, for many an agreeable excursion, we found ourselves in a winding alley, bordered by sheds and cottages, with irregular steps leading up to rustic porches and many a vine-bower and many a trellised walk. No human being was to be heard or seen; no poultry were parading about; and except a beautiful white macaw perched on a broken wall, and nestling his bill under his feathers, not a single member of the feathered creation was visible. There was a holy calm in this midday silence—a sacredness, as if all nature had been fearful to disturb the slumbers of universal Pan.

I kept, however, straggling on—impiously, it would have been thought in Pagan times—between long stretches of garden-walls overhung by fig-trees, the air so profoundly tranquil that I actually heard a fruit drop from a bough. Sometimes I was enticed down a mysterious lane by the prospect of a crag and a Moorish castle which offered itself to view at its termination, and sometimes under ruined arches which crossed my path in the most picturesque manner. So I still continued my devious course with a pertinacity that annoyed my lazy conductor—past utterance, it seems; for during our whole excursion we scarcely exchanged a syllable.

At length, he could bear with my romanceishness no longer; an irresistible somnolency came over him; and, stretching himself out on the bare ground, in the deep shadow of some tall cypress, he gave way to repose most delectably. I was now abandoned entirely to myself, unsubdued by the quiet of the place, and as active as ever. Some tokens of animation, however, in other beings besides myself would not have been displeasing—the dead silence which prevailed began to oppress me.

At length, a faint musical murmur stole upon my ear: I advanced towards the spot whence it seemed to come—a retired garden-house at the end of a pleasant avenue, which to add to its pleasantness, had been lately watered. Drawing nearer and nearer, my heart beating quickly all the while, I distinguished the thrilling cadences of a delightful Brasileira

(sinha che vem da Bahia),—well-known sounds. I looked up to a latticed window just thrown open by a lovely arm—a well-known arm:—"Gracious heavens! Donna Francisca, is it you? What brought you here? What inspired you to exchange Queluz and the Ajuda for this obscure retirement?"

"Ascend these steps, and I will tell you: but your stay must not exceed ten minutes—not a second more."

"Brief indeed," answered I: "I see there is no time to lose."

Up I sprung—and who should receive me? Not the fascinating songstress—not the lady of the lovely arm, but her sedate though very indulgent mother.

"I know whom you are looking for," said the matron; "but it is in vain. You have heard, but are not to see, Francisca, who is no longer the giddy girl you used to dance with; her heart is turned,—nay, do not look so wild,—turned, I tell you, but turned to God. A most holy man, a saint, the very mirror of piety for his years—he is not yet forty, only think!—operated this blessed change. You know how light-hearted, and almost indiscreetly so, my poor dear heart's comfort was. You recollect hearing, and you were terribly angry, I remember, that the English Padre told the Inviada it was shameful how very rapturously my poor dear girl rattled her castanets, and threw back her head, and put forward every other part of her dear little person, at the Factory ball—Shame ON HIM, scandalous old crabbed heretic! Well, it so happened that my Lord High Almoner came to court upon state affairs, accompanied by the precious man I have been talking of,—the most exemplary monk in that noble convent, and its right hand. One day at Queluz he saw my daughter dancing divinely, as you know she did; he heard her sing,—you know how she warbles—she still warbles; HE said (and he has such an eye) that under the veil of all this levity were lurking the seeds of grace. 'I will develope them,' exclaimed this saint upon earth, in a transport of holy fervour. So he set about it,—and a miraculous metamorphosis did he perform: my gay, my dissipated child, became an example of serious piety; no flirting, no racketing, nothing but pious discourse with this best of discoursers. Two months passed away in this exemplary manner. When the time came for my Lord High Almoner to return, our holy friend was in duty bound to accompany

him. What was to be done? Francisca had forgotten everything and everybody else in this sinful world; she existed but for this devout personage; she lived but in his holy smiles when he approved her conduct, and almost died under his reproof when any transient little fault of hers occasioned his enjoining her severe penances: and I shudder to think how severe they sometimes were; for, would you believe it? he has made her submit to flagellation—and, more than once, to goadings with sharp points. In due course, the hour of departure arrived. 'We must all die,' said Francisca; 'my hour is come.' She looked all she said: she pined and languished, and I am convinced would have kept her word, if I had not said, 'Dearest child, there is but one remedy: it is the will of God we should go to Alcobaça; and to Alcobaça we will go, let all your uncles, cousins, and adorers say what they choose to the contrary.' So we took this house and this garden—a nice little garden—only look at these pretty yellow carnations!—and we are very happy in our little way, entirely given up to devotion, under the guidance of our incomparable spiritual director, who allows us to want for nothing, even in this world. See what fruit! what fine sweetmeats! what a relishing Melgaço ham! look at these baskets!."

She was just lifting up the rich damask covers thrown over them, when a most vigorous "Hem! hem!! hem!!!" in the rustic street snapped short the thread of her eloquence, by calling her to the balcony with the utmost precipitation—"Jesu Maria Josè!—he comes! he comes!" Had she seen a ghost instead of a very substantial friar, she could not have started with greater abruptness: her scared looks showed me the door so intelligibly that I was off in a twinkling; it would have been most indiscreet—nay, sacrilegious, to remain a moment longer.

It is now half-past one, and the world of Alcobaça was alive again—the peasant had resumed her distaff, the monk his breviary, the ox his labour, and the sound of the nora, or water-wheel, was heard in the land. The important hour of dinner at the convent I knew was approaching: I wished to scale the crag above the village, and visit the Moorish castle, which looked most invitingly picturesque, with its varied outline of wall and tower; but I saw a posse of monks and

novices advancing from the convent, bowing and beckoning me to return.

So I returned,—and 'twas well I did, as it turned out. Fourteen or fifteen sleek well-fed mules, laden with panniers of neat wicker-work, partially covered with scarlet cloth, were standing about the grand platform before the convent; and the reverend father, one of the prime dignitaries of the chapter, who was waiting at the entrance of the apartment assigned to me, pointed to them, put me in mind that last night I had expressed a vehement wish to visit Batalha; adding most graciously, that the wishes of a person so strongly recommended to them as I had been by the good and great Marquis of Ponte de Lima were laws.

"This very night, if it so please you," said his reverence, "we sleep at Batalha. The convent is poor and destitute, unworthy—nay, incapable of accommodating such guests as my lords the Grand Priors and yourself; but I hope we have provided against the chill of a meagre reception. These mules will carry with them whatever may be required for your comfort. To-morrow, I hope, you will return to us; and the following day, should you inflict upon us the misfortune of losing your delightful society, myself and two of my comrades will have the honour of accompanying you as far back as one of our farms called Pedraneira, on your return to Lisbon."

There was nothing on my part to object to in this arrangement; I fancied too I could discern in it a lurking wish to be quit of our most delightful society, and the turmoil and half-partial restraint it occasioned. Putting on the sweetest smiles of grateful acquiescence, to hear was to obey; everything relating to movements being confirmed by the terzetto of Grand Priors during our repast—copious and splendid as usual.

The carriages drew up very soon after it was ended; my riding horses were brought out, all our respective attendants mustered, and, preceded by a long string of sumpter-mules and baggage-carts, with all their bells in full jingle and all their drivers in full cry, off we set in most formidable array, taking the route of Aljubarota.

Our road, not half so rough as I expected, led us up most picturesquely-shaped steep acclivities, shaded by chestnuts, with here and there a branching pine, for about a league. We then found ourselves on a sort of table-land; and, a mile or

two further, in the midst of a straggling village. There was no temptation to leave the snug corner of our comfortable chaises; so we contented ourselves with surveying at our perfect ease the prospect of the famous plain, which formed the termination of a long perspective of antiquated houses.

Here, on this very plain, was fought, in 1385, the fierce battle which placed the diadem of Portugal on the brow of the glorious and intrepid bastard. It was down that ravine the Castilian cavalry poured along in utter confusion, so hotly pursued that three thousand were slain. On yonder mound stood the King of Castile's tent and temporary chapel, which he abandoned, with all its rich and jewelled furniture, to the conquerors, and scampered off in such alarm that he scarcely knew whether he had preserved his head on his shoulders, till safe within the walls of Santarem, where he tore his hair and plucked off his beard by handfuls, and raved and ranted like a maniac.—The details of this frantic pluckage are to be found in a letter from the Constable Nuno Alvarez Pereira to the Abbot of Alcobaça.

I tried to inspire my right reverend fellow-travellers with patriotic enthusiasm, and to engage them to cast a retrospective glance upon the days of Lusitanian glory. Times present, and a few flasks of most exquisite wine, the produce of a neighbouring vineyard, engrossed their whole attention. "Muito bom—primoroso—excellente," were the only words that escaped their most grateful lips.

The Juiz de Fora of the village, a dabbler in history,—for he told us he had read the Chronicles, and who stood courteously and obsequiously on the step of our carriage door, handing us the precious beverage,—made some attempts to edge in a word about the battle, and particularly about a certain valiant English knight, whose name he did not even pretend to remember, but who might have been a relation of mine for aught he knew to the contrary. Well, this valiant knight, who had vanquished all the chivalry of France and England, had the honour of being vanquished in his turn by the flower of warriors, the renowned Magriço: a great honour too, for Magriço had excellent taste in the choice of his antagonists, and would only fight with the bravest of the brave. "Even so," continued the worthy magistrate, bowing to the earth, "as our great Camoëns testifies."—No answer to all this flourish

except "Ten thousand thanks for your excellent wine: drive on." And drive on we did with redoubled briskness.

The highest exhilaration prevailed throughout our whole caravan. All my English servants were in raptures, ready to turn Catholics. My famous French cook, in the glow of the moment, unpatriotically declared Clos de Vougeot puddle compared to Aljubarota,—divine, perfumed, ethereal Aljubarota! Dr. Ehrhart protested no country under the sun equalled Portugal for curiosities in mineralogy, theology, and wineology —which ology he was now convinced was the best of them all. Franchi mounted one of my swiftest coursers—he had never ventured to mount before—and galloped away like the King of Castile on his flight to Santarem. The Grand Prior and all his ecclesiastical cortège fell fast asleep; and it would have been most irreverend not to have followed so respectable an example. I can therefore describe nothing of the remainder of our route.

The sun had sunk and the moon risen, when a tremendous jolt and a loud scream awakened the whole party. Poor Franchi lay sprawling upon the ground; whilst my Arabian, his glossy sides streaming with blood, was darting along like one of the steeds in the Apocalypse; happily his cast-off rider escaped with a slight contusion.

My eyes being fairly open, I beheld a quiet solitary vale, bordered by shrubby hills; a few huts, and but a few, peeping out of dense masses of foliage; and high above their almost level surface, the great church, with its rich cluster of abbatial buildings, buttresses, and pinnacles, and fretted spires, towering in all their pride, and marking the ground with deep shadows that appeared interminable, so far and so wide were they stretched along. Lights glimmered here and there in various parts of the edifice; but a strong glare of torches pointed out its principal entrance, where stood the whole community waiting to receive us.

Whilst our sumpter-mules were unlading, and ham and pies and sausages were rolling out of plethoric hampers, I thought these poor monks looked on rather enviously. My more ortunate companions—no wretched cadets of the mortification amily, but the true elder sons of fat mother church—could hardly conceal their sneers of conscious superiority. A contrast so strongly marked amused me not a little.

The space before the entrance being narrow, there was some difficulty in threading our way through a labyrinth of panniers, and coffers, and baggage,—and mules, as obstinate as their drunken drivers, which is saying a great deal,—and all our grooms, lackeys, and attendants, half asleep, half muddled.

The Batalha Prior and his assistants looked quite astounded when they saw a gauze-curtained bed, and the Grand Prior's fringed pillow, and the Prior of St. Vincent's superb coverlid, and basins, and ewers, and other utensils of glittering silver, being carried in. Poor souls! they hardly knew what to do, to say, or be at—one running to the right, another to the left —one tucking up his flowing garments to run faster, and another rebuking him for such a deviation from monastic decorum.

At length, order being somewhat re-established, and some fine painted wax tapers, which were just unpacked, lighted, we were ushered into a large plain chamber, and the heads of the order presented by the humble Prior of Batalha to their superior mightinesses of San Vicente and Aviz. Then followed a good deal of gossiping chat, endless compliments, still longer litanies, and an enormous supper.

One of the monks who partook of it, though almost bent double with age, played his part in excellent style. Animated by ample potations of the very best Aljubarota that ever grew, and which we had taken the provident care to bring with us, he exclaimed lustily, "Well, this is as it should be—rare doings! such as have not been witnessed at Batalha since a certain progress that great King, John the Fifth, made hither more than half a century ago. I remember every circumstance attending it as clearly as though it had only taken place last week. But only think of the atrocious impudence of the gout! His blessed Majesty had hardly set down to a banquet ten times finer than this, before that accursed malady, patronized by all the devils in hell, thrust its fangs into his toe. I was at that period in the commencement of my noviciate, a handsome lad enough, and had the much-envied honour of laying a cloth of gold cushion under the august feet of our glorious sovereign. No sooner had the extremities of his royal person come in contact with the stiff embroidery, than he roared out as a mere mortal would have done, and looked as black as a thunder-storm; but soon recovering his most happy benign temper, gave me a rouleau of fine, bright, golden coin, and a tap on

the head,—ay, on this once comely, now poor old shrivelled head. Oh, he was a gracious, open-hearted, glorious monarch —the very King of Diamonds and Lord of Hearts! Oh, he is in heaven, in heaven above! as sure—ay, as sure as I drink your health, most esteemed stranger."

So saying, he drained a huge silver goblet to the last drop, and falling back in his chair, was carried out, chair and all, weeping, puling, and worse than drivelling, with such maudlin tenderness that he actually marked his track with a flow of liquid sorrows.

As soon as an act of oblivion had been passed over this little sentimental mishap by effacing every trace of it, we all rose up and retired to rest: but little rest, however, was in store for me; the heat of my midday ramble, and perhaps some baneful effect from our moon-lit journey, the rays of our cold satellite having fallen whilst I was asleep too directly on my head, had disordered me; I felt disturbed and feverish, a strange jumble of ideas and recollections fermented in my brain—springing in part from the indignant feelings which Donna Francisca's fervour for her monk, and coldness for me, had inspired. I had no wish to sleep, and yet my pleasant retired chamber, with clean white walls, chequered with the reflection of waving boughs, and the sound of a rivulet softened by distance, invited it soothingly. Seating myself in the deep recess of a capacious window which was wide open, I suffered the balsamic air and serene moonlight to quiet my agitated spirits. One lonely nightingale had taken possession of a bay-tree just beneath me, and was pouring forth its ecstatic notes at distant intervals.

In one of those long pauses, when silence itself, enhanced by contrast, seemed to become still deeper, a far different sound than the last I had been listening to caught my ear,—the sound of a loud but melancholy voice echoing through the arched avenues of a vast garden, pronouncing distinctly these appalling words: "Judgment! judgment! tremble at the anger of an offended God! Woe to Portugal! woe! woe!"

My hair stood on end—I felt as if a spirit were about to pass before me; but instead of some fearful shape—some horrid shadow such as appeared in vision to Eliphaz, there issued forth from a dark thicket a tall, majestic, deadly-pale old man: he neither looked about nor above him; he moved slowly on,

his eye fixed as stone, sighing profoundly; and at the distance of some fifty paces from the spot where I was stationed, renewed his doleful cry, his fatal proclamation:—"Woe! woe!" resounded through the still atmosphere, repeated by the echoes of vaults and arches; and the sounds died away, and the spectre-like form that seemed to emit them retired, I know not how nor whither. Shall I confess that my blood ran cold —that all idle, all wanton thoughts left my bosom, and that I passed an hour or two at my window fixed and immovable?

Just as day dawned, I crept to bed and fell into a profound sleep, uninterrupted, I thank Heaven, by dreams.

SEVENTH DAY.

June 9th.—A delightful morning sun was shining in all its splendour, when I awoke, and ran to the balcony, to look at the garden and wild hills, and to ask myself ten times over, whether the form I had seen, and the voice I had heard, were real or imaginary. I had scarcely dressed, and was preparing to sally forth, when a distinct tap at my door, gentle but imperative, startled me.

The door opened, and the Prior of Batalha stood before me. "You were disturbed, I fear," said he, "in the dead of the night, by a wailful voice, loudly proclaiming severe impending judgments. I heard it, also, and I shuddered, as I always do when I hear it. Do not, however, imagine that it proceeds from another world. The being who uttered these dire sounds is still upon the earth, a member of our convent—an exemplary, a most holy man—a scion of one of our greatest families, and a near relative of the Duke of Aveiro, of whose dreadful, agonizing fate you must have heard. He was then in the pride of youth and comeliness, gay as sunshine, volatile as you now appear to be. He had accompanied the devoted Duke to a sumptuous ball given by your nation to our high nobility: —at the very moment when splendour, triumph, and merriment were at their highest pitch, the executioners of Pombal's decrees, soldiers and ruffians, pounced down upon their prey; he too was of the number arrested—he too was thrown into a deep, cold dungeon: his life was spared; and, in the course

of years and events, the slender, lovely youth, now become a wasted, care-worn man, emerged to sorrow and loneliness.

"The blood of his dearest relatives seem sprinkled upon every object that met his eyes; he never passed Belem without fancying he beheld, as in a sort of frightful dream, the scaffold, the wheels on which those he best loved had expired in torture. The current of his young, hot blood was frozen; he felt benumbed and paralysed; the world, the court, had no charms for him; there was for him no longer warmth in the sun, or smiles on the human countenance; a stranger to love or fear, or any interest on this side the grave, he gave up his entire soul to prayer; and, to follow that sacred occupation with greater intenseness, renounced every prospect of worldly comfort or greatness, and embraced our order.

"Full eight-and-twenty years has he remained within these walls, so deeply impressed with the conviction of the Duke of Aveiro's innocence, the atrocious falsehood of that pretended conspiracy, and the consequent unjust tyrannical expulsion of the order of St. Ignatius, that he believes—and the belief of so pure and so devout a man is always venerable—that the horrors now perpetrating in France are the direct consequence of that event, and certain of being brought home to Portugal; which kingdom he declares is foredoomed to desolation, and its royal house to punishments worse than death.

"He seldom speaks; he loathes conversation, he spurns news of any kind, he shrinks from strangers; he is constant at his duty in the choir—most severe in his fasts, vigils, and devout observances; he pays me canonical obedience—nothing more: he is a living grave, a walking sepulchre. I dread to see or hear him; for every time he crosses my path, beyond the immediate precincts of our basilica, he makes a dead pause, and repeats the same terrible words you heard last night, with an astounding earnestness, as if commissioned by God himself to deliver them. And, do you know, my lord stranger, there are moments of my existence when I firmly believe he speaks the words of prophetic truth: and who, indeed, can reflect upon the unheard-of crimes committing in France—the massacres, the desecrations, the frantic blasphemies, and not believe them? Yes, the arm of an avenging God is stretched out, and the weight of impending judgment is most terrible.

"But what am I saying?—why should I fill your youthful

bosom with such apprehensions? I came here to pray your forgiveness for last night's annoyance; which would not have taken place, had not the bustle of our preparations to receive your illustrious and revered companions, the Lord Priors, in the best manner our humble means afford, impeded such precautions as might have induced our reverend brother to forego, for once, his dreary nocturnal walk. I have tried by persuasion to prevent it several times before. To have absolutely forbidden it would have been harsh—nay, cruel,—he gasps so piteously for air: besides, it might have been impious to do so. I have taken opinions in chapter upon this matter, which unanimously strengthen my conviction that the spirit of the Most High moves within him; nor dare we impede its utterance."

I listened with profound seriousness to this remarkable communication;—the Prior read in my countenance that I did so, and was well pleased. Leading the way, he conducted me to a large shady apartment, in which the plash of a neighbouring fountain was distinctly heard. In the centre of this lofty and curiously-groined vaulted hall, resting on a smooth Indian mat, an ample table was spread out with viands and fruits, and liquors cooled in snow. The two prelates, with the monks deputed from Alcobaça to attend them, were sitting round it. They received me with looks that bespoke the utmost kindness, and at the same time suppressed curiosity; but not a word was breathed of the occurrence of last night,—with which, however, I have not the smallest doubt they were perfectly well acquainted.

I cannot say our repast was lively or convivial; a mysterious gloom seemed brooding over us, and to penetrate the very atmosphere—and yet that atmosphere was all loveliness. A sky of intense azure, tempered by fleecy clouds, discovered itself between the tracery of innumerable arches; the summer airs (*aure estive*) fanned us as we sat; the fountain bubbled on; the perfume of orange and citron flowers was wafted to us from an orchard not far off: but, in spite of all these soft appliances, we remained silent and abstracted.

A sacristan, who came to announce that high mass was on the point of celebration, interrupted our reveries. We all rose up—a solemn grace was said, and the Prior of Batalha taking me most benignantly by the hand, the prelates and their attend-

ants followed. We advanced in procession through courts and cloisters and porches, all constructed with admirable skill, of a beautiful grey stone, approaching in fineness of texture and apparent durability to marble. Young boys of dusky complexions, in long white tunics and with shaven heads, were busily employed dispelling every particle of dust. A stork and a flamingo seemed to keep most amicable company with them, following them wherever they went, and reminding me strongly of Egypt and the rites of Isis.

We passed the refectory, a plain solid building, with a pierced parapet of the purest Gothic design and most precise execution, and traversing a garden court divided into compartments, where grew the orange-trees whose fragrance we had enjoyed, shading the fountain by whose murmurs we had been lulled, passed through a sculptured gateway into an irregular open space before the grand western façade of the great church—grand indeed—the portal full fifty feet in height, surmounted by a window of perforated marble of nearly the same lofty dimensions, deep as a cavern, and enriched with canopies and imagery in a style that would have done honour to William of Wykeham, some of whose disciples or co-disciples in the train of the founder's consort, Philippa of Lancaster, had probably designed it.

As soon as we drew near, the valves of a huge oaken door were thrown open, and we entered the nave, which reminded me of Winchester in form of arches and mouldings, and of Amiens in loftiness. There is a greater plainness in the walls, less panelling, and fewer intersections in the vaulted roof; but the utmost richness of hue, at this time of day at least, was not wanting. No tapestry, however rich—no painting, however vivid, could equal the gorgeousness of tint, the splendour of the golden and ruby light which streamed forth from the long series of stained windows: it played flickering about in all directions on pavement and on roof, casting over every object myriads of glowing mellow shadows ever in undulating motion, like the reflection of branches swayed to and fro by the breeze. We all partook of these gorgeous tints—the white monastic garments of my conductors seemed, as it were, embroidered with the brightest flowers of Paradise, and our whole procession kept advancing invested with celestial colours.

Mass began as soon as the high prelatic powers had taken

their stations. It was celebrated with no particular pomp, no glittering splendour; but the countenance and gestures of the officiating priests were characterized by a profound religious awe. The voices of the monks, clear but deep-toned, rose pealing through vast and echoing spaces. The chant was grave and simple: its austerity mitigated in some parts by the treble of very young choristers. These sweet and innocent sounds found their way to my heart—they recalled to my memory our own beautiful cathedral service, and—I wept! My companions, too, appeared unusually affected; their thoughts still dwelling, no doubt, on that prophetic voice which never failed to impress its hearers with a sensation of mysterious dread.

It was in this tone of mind, so well calculated to nourish solemn and melancholy impressions, that we visited the mausoleum where lie extended on their cold sepulchres the effigies of John the First and the generous-hearted, noble-minded Philippa; linked hand in hand in death, as fondly they were in life.—This tomb is placed in the centre of the chapel.

Under a row of arches on the right, fretted and pinnacled and crocketed in the best style of Gothic at its best period, lie, sleeping the last sleep, their justly renowned progeny, the Regent Pedro, Duke of Coimbra, whose wise administration of government, during the minority of his nephew and son-in-law Alfonso the Fifth, rendered Portugal so prosperous, and whose death, by the vilest treachery, on the field of Alfarubeira, was the fatal consequence of bitter feud and civil jealousies; the Infante, Dom John, a man of pure and blameless life; Fernando, whose protracted captivity in Africa was a long agony, endured with the resigned and pious fortitude of a Christian martyr; and Henry, to whom his country is beholden for those triumphant maritime discoveries, the result of his scientific researches unwearyingly pursued in calm and studious retirement.

All these princes, in whom the high bearing of their intrepid father, and the exemplary virtues and strong sense of their mother, the grand-daughter of our Edward the Third, were united, repose, after their toils and suffering, in this secluded chapel, which looks indeed a place of rest and holy quietude; the light, equably diffused, forms as it were a tranquil atmosphere, such as might be imagined worthy to surround the predestined to happiness in a future world.

I withdrew from the contemplation of these tombs with reluctance; every object in the chapel which contains them being so pure in taste, so harmonious in colour; every armorial device, every mottoed lambel, so tersely and correctly sculptured, associated also so closely with historical and English recollections—the garter, the leopards, the fleur-de-lis, "from haughty Gallia torn;" the Plantagenet cast of the whole chamber conveyed home to my bosom a feeling so interesting, so congenial, that I could hardly persuade myself to move away, though my reverend conductors began to show evident signs of impatience.

The Prior of St. Vincent's observed to me, that as my Lord High Almoner expected us back to dinner, and had set his heart upon an *omelette à la provençale*, which he eagerly desired might be tossed up by my divine (as he was pleased to call him) French cook, we had no time to lose. We were therefore hurried unmercifully through the royal cloisters, a glorious square of nearly two hundred feet, surrounded by most beautifully-proportioned arches, filled up with a tracery as quaint as any of the ornaments of Roslin chapel, but infinitely more elegant: it is impossible to praise too warmly their tasteful and delicate ramifications.

I could not fail observing the admirable order in which every, the minutest, nook and corner of this truly regal monastery is preserved: not a weed in any crevice, not a lichen on any stone, not a stain on the warm-coloured, apparently-marble walls, not a floating cress on the unsullied waters of the numerous fountains. The ventilation of all these spaces was most admirable; it was a luxury to breathe the temperate delicious air, blowing over the fresh herbs and flowers, which filled the compartments of a parterre in the centre of the cloister, from which you ascend by a few expansive steps to the chapter-house, a square of seventy feet, and the most strikingly beautiful apartment I ever beheld. The graceful arching of the roof, unsupported by console or column, is unequalled: it seems suspended by magic; indeed, human means failed twice in constructing this bold unembarrassed space. Persevérance, and the animating encouragement of the sovereign founder, at length conquered every difficulty, and the work remains to this hour secure and perfect.

This stately hall, though appropriated to the official resort of the living, is also a consecrated abode of the dead. On

a raised platform in the centre, covered with rich palls, are placed the tombs of Alfonso the Fifth, and his grandson, a gallant, blooming youth, torn from life, and his newly-married consort, the Infanta of Castile, and its fairest flower, at the early age of seventeen: with him expired the best hopes of Portugal, and of his father, the great John the Second.

My conductors, a great deal less affected than myself, would not allow me even one moment to ruminate and moralize upon vicissitudes and bereavements—they quite urged me along; and, to aid their active intentions, a tide of monks, sacristans, novices, seminarists, and the Lord knows who beside, appeared all of a sudden, flowing forth from every cell and cloister: they had been all congregated, it seems, to do us honour and bid us adieu. The Prior, with his hands crossed on his breast, made me a low obeisance, and then opening his arms, gave me a cordial embrace.

Our army of attendants, mules, horses, and carriages, were all in waiting, ready drawn up at the same portal by which we had entered the night before. A grand interchange of salutations having taken place, we departed, the fatal voice, I verily believe, sounding in the ears of most of us—it certainly did in mine.

To dissipate impressions which hung heavily upon me, I asked permission of my illustrious companions to mount my horse, and to leave them to the ease and comfort of their capacious chaise; they *of course* returning by Aljubarota, and I by a short cut, over some of the wildest be-pined, and be-rose-maryed, and be-lavendered country I ever met with. Franchi, who was perfectly well acquainted with this wilderness, steered my course through all its mazes and straggling paths of sand and turf, alternately, bordered by the gum-cistus in full flaring flower, so strongly scented as almost to command me to go to sleep.

Dr. Ehrhart had taken his departure several hours before, charged with the important mission of conveying my culinary artist, the incomparable Monsieur Simon, to the longing arms of my Lord High Almoner; and, above all, by a vehement impulse to visit the infirmary of the convent, which he had been told contained an unusual number of patients, many of whom were afflicted with unusual disorders. This was attraction for him in an irresistible shape, and he most gladly left

Batalha, and all its historical glories (tombs, altars, and chapels, finished or unfinished), to enjoy it.

I cannot describe in too glowing colours the increased jubilation with which I had the glory of being received by my Lord Abbot upon my return; for not only did he pass the threshold of his majestic portals to bid me welcome, but his principal confidant and factotum, the Sub-Prior (whose strongly marked features were quite in the style of some of the finest studies of Masaccio), assisted me to dismount, and condescendingly held my stirrup. From all these redoubled attentions, I plainly perceived that the wind had changed in my favour several points since yesterday; and what do you think had produced this agreeable alteration? — the *omelette à la provençale.*

"Oh, my dear, most excellent stranger!" (my name for the time being had totally escaped him), exclaimed his right reverence, "what a treasure you possess in that admirable artist — O grande Simaõ! he has had the kindness to cast a new light over my stoves,—he is liberality itself; for, instead of locking up his knowledge, he has diffused it throughout my whole kitchen. Here —" continued he, pulling out some scrawls which Franchi had translated from the original French into very aboriginal Portuguese — "Here are receipts, with marginal notes and illustrations, I mean to preserve, as carefully as I would a string of pearls, till my last hour. But, is it true, is it possible, you can be meditating to leave us so soon? Some bird of evil note whispered in my ear that you were determined to leave us to-morrow morning. Let me conjure you not to think of it: one day more, at least, do I pray and beseech you to bestow on us. My revered lords the Priors of Aviz and St. Vincent's have consented to comply with my request, subject to your approval—oh, do not refuse them and me!"

"Whatever your right reverence and my illustrious friends so earnestly desire cannot meet on my part with the slightest impediment," answered I with a reverential obeisance.

"Now then," rejoined the Prior, clapping his hands in ecstasy, "we shall have that famous dish the admirable Simon promised me, — a macédoine, worthy of Alexander the Great; most happy, most grateful do I feel myself. But time is on the wing — let us profit whilst we can. I see you wish to refresh yourself by a change of dress in your own apartment:

be it so — but don't be long; dinner shall be on table the moment you are ready; and you know, good becomes bad, in the case of dishes at least, if we wait a second beyond the auspicious time."

Such logic was irresistible; I made all the haste required, and we sat down, I can truly say, to one of the most delicious banquets ever vouchsafed a mortal on this side Mahomet's paradise. The macédoine was perfection, the ortolans and quails lumps of celestial fatness, and the sautés and béchamels beyond praise; and a certain truffle cream so exquisite, that my Lord Abbot forestalled the usual grace at the termination of repasts, most piously to give thanks for it.

The dinner was about half over, when in came Dr. Ehrhart in high spirits, rubbing his hands with triumphant glee, and talking to himself, as he was often wont, in the purest Alsatian. He had passed a couple of hours in the infirmary, and had visited all its closets of vials and gallipots. The drugs were not such (he informed us) either in quantity or quality as he could warmly commend; but the stock of maladies, to the alleviation of which they were destined, most ample. He had found a pretty sprinkling of complicated cases, — some highly curious, and, no doubt, *piquant:* one in particular, an ulcer of tremendous size, exhibited every freak Dame Nature was capable of playing upon such an occasion,—suppuration in one corner, callosity in another. He spoke of it in raptures, and regretted our stay was too limited to allow his committing to paper an exact delineation of this magnificent object in all its glow of colouring. He spoke handsomely also of the compound fracture of somebody's left leg. But when he came to the description of a sweet, simple perennial sore (simplex immunditiis), which had continued during a series of years to ebb and flow as regularly as the ocean, his enthusiasm knew no bounds. He said it was a most singular case — a beautiful case; a case so remarkable, so unprecedented, that he was determined all Europe should ring of it from side to side. He would throw his thoughts upon it into a dissertation of the length of at least sixty pages — that he would — and dedicate it to his native university. Then, bursting forth into a torrent of Latin, rendered unintelligible to all but the frequenters of Strasbourg or Colmar by the most villainous Alsatian twang, addressed himself point-blank to my Lord Abbot.

His right reverence, by no means pleased at being roused from the joys of the table by such an appeal and upon such a subject, very coolly replied, "that he made it a rule never to speak or hear the Latin language out of the choir, if he could possibly help it." This so palpable a rebuff silenced the good Doctor, who had recourse to copious libations of generous wine to dispel the disappointment it occasioned; for he saw plainly that neither the fierce ulcer nor the gentle sore would meet with that attention from the supreme disposer of all things at Alcobaça, he was convinced they deserved so richly.

Notwithstanding the plastic effects of good cheer and flowing cups, my inestimable physician continued growling in an under-tone during the whole remainder of our repast. And now the fulness of time for removing from the banquet-hall to the adjoining saloon being come, we repaired to another table, where all the delights of fruit and confectionery awaited us. Observing a good deal of whispering and message-sending between the Priors and their confidential attendants going forward, accompanied by nods and winks, I thought something particular for our special amusement was in contemplation; nor was I deceived: the agreeable little mystery was soon cleared up by the entrance of a tall, hook-nosed, sallow-complexioned personage, in a tarnished court suit, who advanced with measured strides, beating with one hand a slow and solemn tattoo upon a roll of parchment which he carried in the other.

I could not conceive what patent or document was about to be unfolded, when the personage giving the parchment a quick twirl with his bird-claw-like fingers, it displayed itself in the shape of a theatrical bill, engrossed in large characters flaming with vermilion and gold. On this scroll I read most distinctly that—this night, by the grace of God and the especial permission of the Abbot of Alcobaça, High Almoner of Portugal, etc., etc., etc., would be enacted the excruciating tragedy of *Donna Iñez de Castro*, and the cruel murder of that lovely lady and her two innocent royal infants, represented on the stage: the part of Donna Iñez by Senhor Agostinho Josè.

"The murder of the two royal infants!" exclaimed I; "what means this? We know too well, alas! how the Lady Iñez was disposed of; but her two sweet babes escaped from the fangs of the tyrant—did they not, my good Lord Abbot?"

"To be sure they did," replied his right reverence: "but this fine drama is not the production of one of our national bards;—an Italian gentleman, who has done us the honour of partaking of our hospitality for several years, and acquired in perfection our language, is the author; and, being a stranger, cannot be expected to feel so acutely for those precious infants as we Portuguese do: he therefore asked my leave to have them murdered, in order to add to the effect of the catastrophe. Rather than thwart a person of such transcendent abilities, and my very particular friend, I consented. He had half a mind to make them fall by their mother's own poniard in a fit of frenzy: but I could not allow of that; it would have been stretching a little too far—don't you think so?"

Recollecting the stretches I had often met with at home in historical novels—witness Miss Lee's "Recess" and many others—I made no objection, and turning to the bard, who was standing by rapt into future murders, praised his sublime efforts in the tragic vein—the *terribile via*—in the most glowing terms I could muster. Animated by these grateful eulogies, he vociferated with dreadful vehemence, "Let me but live a few years longer, and I will be the death of half the regal personages in the Portuguese history, after my own fashion and no other. I will slay them magnificently on the battle-field, though they died in their brocaded beds with all their courtiers puling around them; I will sink them in the ocean, though they expired on dry land;—their agonies in the act of drowning shall be horrible;—nay, more, I will call upon the Prince of the Morning, upon Lucifer himself, to bear them away for some secret sin or compact, though the prayers of the church had been exhausted to avert such a direful calamity."

I thought this was a stretch with a vengeance: the Abbot, I plainly saw by his countenance, was of the same opinion; but, giving his ample shoulders a kind commiserating shrug (for the bard was a special favourite), contented himself with whispering to me—"Sta doëdo—sta doëdo; the man's mad—all poets are."

The Grand Prior of Aviz, who seemed to have no doubt of the truth of this observation in the present instance, looked at the bard with an expression of alarm that was almost ludicrous, and shrinking back in his chair, exclaimed piteously, "What,

Donna Iñez and her children butchered upon the stage! I shall never be able to stand this; my eyes would become fountains, and we have had weeping enough lately" (alluding perhaps to the liquefaction scene of last night): "tragedies of so deep a dye as this we are promised, affect my nerves in the most painful manner." So saying, he retired without further ceremony, accompanied by two reverend fathers, dignitaries of the convent, who professed the same clerical aversion to scenes of bloodshed.

As soon as they had departed to a quiet game of voltarete in their own snug quarters, the Lord Abbot, observing it was growing late (for we had passed a most unconscionable time at table), invited me to repair, under his Sub-Prior's guidance, to a theatre which had been temporarily fitted up in the most distant part of this immense edifice,* of the extent of which, as well as of the endless variety of its cloistered galleries, cells, chapels, and chambers, I had not till this moment an adequate idea. Our peregrinations, therefore, were none of the shortest or least intricate. We passed through several galleries but feebly lighted, disturbing, I fear, the devotions of some aged monks, who were putting up their orisons before a lugubrious image of our Lady of the Seven Dolours, placed under a most sumptuously fringed and furbelowed canopy of purple velvet.

Farther on, another vast corridor branched off to that part of the convent allotted to scholars and novices. Not a few of these gentle youths were pursuing the study of the Jew's harp, and twanging away most proficiently. All these scudded off upon our approach,—the whole party had been at high romps, I suspect, from their flushed and blowzy appearance,—wishing us, I dare say, in purgatory, or a worse place, for having intruded upon their recreations.

Advancing with due gravity, the valves of a lofty architectural door, with a pompous inscription on the pediment in golden characters, were unfolded, and we entered an extraordinary spacious, coved saloon, which appeared to have been assigned

* My readers need not start at the idea of a play in a convent, and a synod of reverend fathers assisting at its representation. Such entertainments were often resorted to at Mafra to dispel the profound ennui of that royal and monastic residence—the Escurial of Portugal. Upon these occasions, the actors, orchestra, and audience were all monks, with the exception of his late Majesty, John the Sixth, and a few especial lay favourites.

to holier purposes, for there was an organ in a recess on one side of it. Across the whole end of this apartment was extended an immense green curtain, with the insignia of the convent emblazoned upon it in vivid colours; the centre of the saloon was occupied, as might have been expected, with many a row of polished oaken benches; but what I did not expect was an assemblage of more than one hundred venerable fathers, sitting in solemn ranks, as if they had been assisting at an ecumenical council, some wiping their spectacles, and some telling their beads. An effluvia, neither of jasmine nor roses—in short, that species of high conventual frowziness which monastic habits and garments are not a little apt to engender, affected my lay nerves most disagreeably.

The Prior of St. Vincent's, perceiving the uneasy curl up of my nose, whispered his neighbour, who whispered a second, who whispered a third, and presently a most grateful vapour of fragrant herbs and burnt lavender filled the room. Through its medium appeared descending from a portal, by a flight of most spacious steps, the Lord Abbot himself in grand costume. He insisted, with a positiveness which I could not avoid obeying, that I should take his abbatial chair next the orchestra, and placed himself on another equally ponderous, conceding the one on my right hand to the Prior of St. Vincent's.

We were no sooner settled, than half-a-dozen sharp-toned fiddles, a growling bass, two over-grown mandolines (lutes I suppose I ought to style them), and a pair of flutes most nauseously tweedled upon by two wanton-looking, blear-eyed young monks, who it would be charitable to suppose had caught cold at some midnight choral service, struck up a most singular and original species of antiquated overture. It was full of jerking passages in the style of *Les Folies d'Espagne*, and ended with a fugue that was catch-who-can in perfection.

Instead of the curtains drawing up at the conclusion of this strange musical farrago, there was a tedious pause, and I had full time to look round on the audience. Not five monks off my fauteuil, I caught the evil eye of Donna Francisca's director, sitting apart from the rest of the assembly, and looking more terrifically glum than any saint I ever beheld on an Italian sign-post, or in a German prayer-book.

I was trying to account for the delay of the performance, when sounds not unlike those which often proceed from a dis-

turbed hen-roost became audible. Franchi's voice sounded predominant in this strange hubbub; and I found out afterwards that he had been fruitlessly attempting to persuade the Lady Iñez (one of the most ungainly hobbledehoys I ever met with) to abjure an enormous pair of jingling earrings, and to reduce a sweeping train he kept floundering over at every step, to the proportion of those in fashion amongst the tragedy queens of the Salitri theatre. Anything in the shape of metropolitan criticism wounded the awkward stripling's provincial amour propre so deeply, that he threatened hysterics and an appeal to the Lord Abbot. This was conclusive; Franchi gave way, the Lady Iñez retained her overflowing robes and her earrings, and the curtain rose.

Said his right reverence, whispering to me over the arm of my ponderous chair, "If you had heard Agostinho's declamation only two months ago, you would have been enchanted—his tones were so touching, so pathetic: his voice is now a little broken down; but you, who *have* an *ear*, will soon discover that it is on the high road of becoming a grand baritone: and as for his action, I am convinced you will soon allow nothing was ever more sublime."

Just as I was on the point of replying to this warm encomium in a strain of correspondent eulogy, my Lord Abbot gently murmured, "Hush, hush! don't you hear the Lady Iñez?" I certainly did—and well I might, for a louder bellow was never given by the flower of any dairy. No cow bereaved of her last-dropped young one ever uttered sounds more doleful: they increased in depth and dismality, till the forlorn damsel, advancing to the lights on the stage, cried out, "Cru-ēl, cru-ēl!" addressing, I suppose, the phantom of her redoubted father-in-law,—"and wouldst thou slay my innocents? Hast thou discovered my peaceful retirement? Where fly? where run?" She then continued, in a flow of at least one hundred lines, to picture her agonizing fears, her dire presentiments, her frightful dreams; and with looks that were meant to tear our feelings to the last tatter, she thus described her most terrific vision:

> "On thy wan disk, O pale and ghastly moon!
> I saw portray'd a vengeful countenance;
> And whilst upon it I did wildly gaze,
> Methought it wore the semblance of the King—
> (Now gelid horror claim'd me for her own).

I tried to fly—I fled but all in vain,
The dreaded face pursued me.
If I turn'd back, 'twas there; if I advanced,
The stern, cold image seem'd to freeze my soul,
Changing the genial current of my blood
Into a substance more severe than stone.
Avaunt, my hapless babes! approach me not,
Lest by some fatal petrifying power
Your limbs be fix'd in durance."

Donna Iñez, by good luck, declaimed this magnificent piece of nonsense in a tolerably even key, and with really so just an emphasis, that the enraptured bard, laying aside his prompting-book, could not resist exclaiming, "What do you think of that?"—"E boa, e boa!" replied the Lord Abbot. And the whole assembly, both before and behind the scenes, re-echoed with one accord this favourable sentiment, and nothing but "E boa, e boa!" was heard from one end of the saloon to the other.

Such universal encouragement did not fail to produce its effect upon Donna Iñez,—rather too much so; for the higher notes of her semi-soprano voice having regained the ascendant, she squalled out of all mercy. My sense of hearing is painfully acute, and I hardly know what I would not have given for cotton to stop my ears with. However, they had soon a respite, Heaven be praised! the second act being totally employed by the plots and contrivances of the King and his counsellors,—quiet, chatty people, as loyal and complaisant as King Arthur's courtiers, Noodle, Doodle, and Foodle, in the incomparable tragedy of Tom Thumb.

In act the third, to my infinite astonishment, I found his Majesty totally unacquainted with the little circumstance of Donna Iñez having favoured his recreant son with a brace of children: he more than suspected espousals had taken place between them, but he little thought any fruits from the degrading match were in existence. Upon his prime counsellor's disclosing the fact, he asks with a perfidious coolness, "What are they like?"—"Doves, my dread lord," answers the counsellor with infinite suavity: to which the infuriated monarch replies with a voice of thunder,

"It matters not, I'll tear their felon hearts—
PERISH THEY SHALL!"

And with this horrid menace quits the stage in a paroxysm

of ungovernable fury, still repeating behind the scenes "Perish they shall!" which was repeated again and again from the top of a ladder, by an old dignified monk, a passionate lover of the drama, but who being decorously shy of appearing on the open boards, had taken the part of Echo, which he performed to admiration.

Act the fourth offered nothing very loud or remarkable; but in act the fifth, horror and terror were working up to the highest pitch; two determined assassins had been procured —their looks most murderous—the children ran off—the assassins pursued—shrill and bitter squeakings were heard at the farthest extremity of the stage, such as a desperate conflict between rats or mice often produces behind old walls or wainscotings. The audience appeared prodigiously affected; most of them stood up, stretching out their necks like a flock of alarmed turkeys. This dreadful hurry-skurry ended by the first assassin's seizing the eldest infant by its beautiful hair, and tossing it apparently dead upon the stage. Three or four drops of pigeon's blood, squeezed out of some invisible receptacle, added a horrible appearance of reality to the foul deed.

It was now the other infant's turn to be murdered; and murdered it was, in a style that would not have disgraced one of Herod's best practitioners. The poor helpless innocent, who appeared to be most dreadfully frightened in right earnest, delivered its little dying speech with so much artlessness, that I was not surprised to see tears fall and hear sobs heave all around me. In short, affliction was almost exhausted to the last drop before Donna Iñez was driven in, who, after calling to the sun, moon, and stars for vengeance, in accents at times most deep, at others most piercing, was immolated, by three distinct stabs of a poniard, upon the bodies of her children.

The deed so completely done, his most revengeful majesty, gloomier than Dis, and looking more truculent than ever the King of Judea was supposed to have done, entered with royal and stately step—stood gloating a minute or two over the horrid spectacle, and then, with the hoarse note of a carrion crow, croaked forth, "I am satisfied." The curtain fell; and putting aside its folds with a withered hand trembling with agitation, out issued the bard himself to speak an epilogue

in his own character. It was tiresome and pompous enough, God knows, and concluded with a tirade, not exactly *à la Camoens*, pretty nearly as follows:

> "Lord of the firmament, couldst thou blaze on,
> Urging thy coursers through the plains of light,
> And not start back, affrighted at the deed!
> Moon, veil thy orb—be quench'd, ye conscious stars,
> Never again to sparkle as before!"

Every soul in the assembly seemed to stand aghast, imprecating vengeance on the ruthless monarch, and feeling for the murdered innocents to their hearts' core. Donna Iñez was called for by my Lord Abbot, and embraced by his right reverence most blubberingly. The kind-hearted Prior of St. Vincent's wept aloud,—I tried my best, though in a lower key, to imitate him; the Poet was lauded to the skies, and received from the fountain-head of all good within these precincts something more solid than praise—a richly embroidered purse, heavy and chinking, which he deposited in one of his lank pockets, after making a grateful profound genuflexion.

"And now," said my Lord Abbot, "let us dry our tears and go to supper; and in order to give merit its just due, the Poet and Agostinho shall be of the party."—"Why not?" said the Prior of St. Vincent's.—"Why not," echoed I, "provided we have neither the King nor the murderers?"

As sunshine so frequently follows dark and drizzling weather, nothing could be more blithe or even frolicsome than our repast. The Grand Prior of Aviz, whom we found already placed near the hospitable board with his two card companions, talking over their game, congratulated himself warmly upon having escaped such a severe assault upon the pathetic feelings, and enjoyed the festivity of the moment without alloy. So we all did; and it was at a very late hour of one of the blandest summer nights I ever experienced that we retired to our apartments.

EIGHTH DAY.

June 10*th*.—One may have too much of the good and grand things of this wicked world after all. I began to be tired of such perpetual gourmandizing—the fumes of banquets and in-

cense—the repetition of pompous rites—the splendour of illuminated altars and saints and madonnas, in fusty saloons, under still fustier canopies. My soul longed for an opener expanse—the canopy of the heavens. So I said to myself, "Dr. Ehrhart may enjoy his infirmary; Franchi, his endeavours to introduce a purer taste of costume on the ruler of Alcobaça's temporary theatre; the Priors, their cards and their devotions; I will place the incomparable Simon at my Lord Almoner's uninterrupted disposal—they may toss omelets and season matelottes to their hearts' content, and, this being a day by courtesy entitled meagre, select the finest fish from their choicest reservoirs, if they so fancy. I pant like a hart for living waters: I am determined to follow the course of the river I noticed yesterday, winding its fresh sparkling stream between aromatic thickets; and should it lead me along its banks all the way to Batalha, so much the better. I have not seen half I wanted to see in that holy spot; and what little I did see floated before me like the shadows of a dream. I must be more intimately acquainted with the unfinished mausoleum of Don Emanuel, of which I have heard and read so much;—in short, I must breathe, which I can hardly be said to do in this too rich, too luxurious, too heavy atmosphere."

These sage resolves being taken and communicated in due form to my right reverend companions, and by them to the ruling power of Alcobaça (for I did not wish to disturb my Lord Abbot's slumbers, even with the good news of my having given up Monsieur Simon to his guidance), I mounted my Arabian, patted his glossy neck, and whispering in his ear, "Now we will repair to the desert—you will think of your native wilds, and I of mine,"—off I galloped.

The fertile meadows and inclosures immediately round the convent were soon passed, and so were the chestnut woods hanging on the steeps crowned by the Moorish castle. My courser in full proof, pampered by the rich provender he had been so abundantly supplied with, set no bounds to his exertions, and I had hardly gained the level on the summit of the hills towards Aljubarota, before he fairly ran away with me. The country people, who, to do them justice, appeared very industriously employed, could not, however, help leaving their work to stare at the velocity of my scamper, distending their

eyes as wide as they could possibly be distended when they beheld my Arabian on full stretch,

> "With flying speed outstrip the rapid wind,
> And leave the breezes of the morn behind."

The morn itself was most exhilarating: I never breathed in any atmosphere so pure or so elastic—it seemed to sparkle with life and light. The azure bloom investing the line of mountains which shelter Leiria was most beautiful. I longed to transfer their picturesquely-varied outline to the leaves of my sketch-book; but it was in vain I wished to stop for that purpose—neither snaffle nor curb could arrest the speed of my courser.

At length, after a most inveterate gallop of at least five miles right a-head, persuasion effected what force was completely unequal to. He gave a lively, good-humoured, playful neigh, obeyed my much-loved voice, and halted. We were standing on an expanse of the smoothest sand, as firmly bound together as the nicest rolled walks of a regal garden; here and there patches of anemones and fragrant brushwood, cistus, lavender, and rosemary, varied the surface in irregular forms, like those of islands and continents distinctly defined on a map. No object afforded the smallest indication of human existence—neither the pointed roof of a shepherd's hovel, nor even a curling smoke. As far as the eye could reach, one uniform waste of level shrubs extended itself, bathed in the same equal purple light, and fanned by the same delightful air, impregnated with the same balsamic odour; an elysium without inhabitants,—unless, indeed, the souls of the departed were hovering about this serene and tranquil region, invisible to mortal eye.

Perhaps my Arabian beheld objects we are forbidden to gaze at; for he started and pawed the ground, and snorted with such vehemence that I almost expected every moment to see fire flash from his nostrils. By degrees this violent ferment subsided, and he became calm; what we superciliously call instinct seemed to point out to him that the region into which he had been pleased to carry me was totally barren of refreshment, and upon loosening his bridle, and allowing him to take what route he pleased, most prudently did he trace back his steps between entangled bushes, till I found

myself under the shade of a forest of pine and chestnut, through which I descended to the margin of the river I so particularly wished to explore: and twenty times did I bless myself for having determined to follow the banks of this beautiful stream, the scenery they presented having a cast so novel and uncommon.

A broad path, or rather causeway, perfectly hard and dry, led me between a gigantic growth of canes, knotted like the bamboo; bulrushes of enormous size, and osiers, the tallest I had ever seen, waving their fresh green leaves high above my head, which they completely screened from the sun. The coolness they diffused, their incessant whispers, and the clear current of the river rippling among their stems, was so grateful both to the eye and ear, that I kept listening and lingering on, unwilling to emerge from this strange wilderness, and almost fancying I beheld one of those forests of weeds and grasses which, some five or six hundred thousand years ago, afforded refuge to a stupendous variety of monsters. Happily no icthyosaurus—no tortoise fifty feet in diameter, with paddles thrice as large as the helm of a first-rate man-of-war, oppressed me with their presence. I saw no living objects, except a shoal of fish, with scales as bright as silver, swiftly darting under the low arches formed by the luxuriant vegetation; and lizards as green as emeralds, ascending the sides of the causeway, and looking at me, I thought, with kind and friendly eyes.

For more than half a league did I continue along the path, hemmed in by aquatic plants of extraordinary vigour, springing from the richest alluvial soil. At length, just as I was beginning to think this world of reeds and osiers had no termination, the stream took a sudden bend, which I followed, and making the best of my way through every obstacle, escaped into an open space and open daylight. Right before me, at the extremity of an assemblage of hillocks, some bare, some covered with flowering heaths, but destitute of human or animal inhabitants, stood the lofty majestic basilica of Batalha, surrounded by its glorious huddle of buildings, from this point most picturesquely foreshortened. I could hardly believe so considerable and striking a group of richly parapeted walls, roofs, and towers, detached chapels, and insulated spires, formed parts of one and the same edifice: in appearance it was not merely a church

or a palace I was looking at, but some fair city of romance, such as an imagination glowing with the fancies of Ariosto might have pictured to itself under the illusion of a dream.

Keeping my eyes fixed on a prospect which I tried to persuade myself partook less of the real than the visionary, I traversed an extensive level of sunburnt turf, and, on the other side of the hillocks bounding the lawn, again found myself on the banks of the river, which here presented the loveliest of mirrors—so calm, so pellucid, that I thought it a thousand pities no pleasanter objects were reflected from its surface, than a long line of ghost-like fathers, each with a fishing-rod projecting from his piebald drapery, angling on with pale and patient countenances. I did not perceive the melancholy prophet in this rank and file,—and I was not sorry; I dreaded to encounter his withering glance, to hear his foreboding voice; for I had been told he often pressed prophecies upon those least inclined to seek them, and I shrank from any knowledge of the horrors he might possibly disclose to me. Far from desiring to catch even the shadow of coming events, I said to myself, in the nervous language of Dryden,

> "Seek not to know what must not be reveal'd;
> Joys only flow where fate is most conceal'd.
> Too busy man would find his sorrows more,
> If future fortunes he could know before;
> For by that knowledge of his destiny,
> He would not live at all, but always die."

Not above one hundred yards from the spot selected by the reverend fathers for their quiet recreation, the river, as if tired of being calm and placid, flowed with a brisker current, and rushing over a ledge of rocks, became all froth and foam. The light spray occasioned by its rapid movement refreshed the herbage on its banks so invitingly, that I leapt off my courser, and allowed him to profit as much as he pleased by the abundant pasture.

Throwing myself on the solid ground, I kept intensely poring over the stream, lost and absorbed in the train of interesting yet melancholy recollections which all that had occurred to me since I first entered this fair realm of Portugal was so well calculated to excite. I thought (alas! how vainly now!) of offers I had slighted with so much levity; of opportunities which, had they been grasped with a decided hand, might have

led to happy results, and stemmed a torrent of evils. Since that period, the germ of destructiveness, which might then have been trodden down, has risen into a tree fraught with poisons, darkening the wholesome light, and receiving nourishment, through all its innumerably varied fibres, from the lowest depths of hell.

Whilst I was watching the constant flow of waters, and giving way to a tide of regrets in my own bosom equally ceaseless, the full rich tones of the conventual bells came booming over the watery levels—a summons the monks dared not disobey. Putting up their fishing-rods, they all dispersed in silence, with the exception of one, whom I joyfully recognised upon his nearer approach, and who seemed to feel equal pleasure in recognizing me.

"To what lucky chance," said the Prior (for it was he who had advanced to me), "are we indebted for the renewal of a visit I scarcely ventured to flatter myself would have taken place so soon?"

"To the genuine desire," answered I, "not only of assuring you once more of my real veneration, but a wish to examine the mausoleum of Don Emanuel, which I totally neglected in the hurry of yesterday.—You remember how they pushed me along?"

He smiled; and I could not help thinking, from the cast of his countenance, that a few details of our Alcobaça banquets and compotations would not have been ill received. Being, however, too discreet to tell tales out of this pious school, I said nothing of our gay supper, of my Lord Abbot's epicurean worship, of Monsieur Simon, or of the Poet, or of "our tragedy," or Senhor Agostinho (ycleped Donna Iñez), or of Donna Francisca's director,—though I had his cursed name on the tip of my tongue, ready to bolt out with not a few bitter animadversions upon a species of piety which had deprived me of many and many an hour of cheerfulness and joy.

Repressing, upon reflection, every spark of curiosity, as befitted a holy personage weaned from idle gossip, the good Prior most charitably observed, "that my horse stood in need of more substantial refection than he could find on the river banks; and that, although he could not offer luxuries such as I had been accustomed to, the simple fare his far from wealthy convent afforded would be served up to me most gladly."

Taking himself my horse by the bridle, he ushered me across the lawn into the same quadrangular cool and lofty chamber I had supped in before. A very youthful-looking lay brother received my Arabian into his charge with great delight, and stroked its mane and kissed its neck in a transport of childish fondness.

As to me, though I was treated with less enthusiasm, there was no want of the utmost cordiality in my reception. An immense earthen platter, containing a savoury mess of fish and rice, vegetables delicately fried after the Italian fashion, carafes of wine, baskets of ripe and fragrant fruit, pomegranates, apricots, and oranges, were neatly arranged on a marble table, having in its centre a rock of transparent ice, shining with ten thousand prismatic colours. To this frugal collation I sat down with the most sincere appetite, and was waited upon with hospitable glee by the angels of this wilderness—two lay brothers and as many novices,—all of whom appeared enchanted with an opportunity of making themselves of some use in this mortal existence. The Prior, crossing his hands on his bosom, entreated me to dispense with his attentions for half-an-hour, the choir service imperatively requiring his presence.

As soon as he had taken his departure, followed by his friars and novices, I gave myself wholly up to the enjoyment of those romantic fancies the surrounding scenery was so admirably well adapted to inspire. Two stately portals, thrown wide open to catch the breezes, admitted views of the principal courts and cloisters of this unequalled monument of the purest taste of the fourteenth century. A tranquil, steady sunlight overspread their grand broad surfaces. The graceful spire, so curiously belted with zones of the richest carved work, rose high above the ornamented parapets, relieved by a soft and mellow evening sky. None of the monks were moving about; but I heard with a sort of mournful pleasure their deep and solemn voices issuing from the great porch of the transept nearest the choir.

The young Egyptian-looking boys in white linen tunics I had noticed at my first visit were all at their accustomed avocations, dislodging every atom of dust from the deeply-indented tracery. The flamingo was there, but I missed the stork,—and knew but too soon the cause of his being missed;

for, upon ascending the steps before the chapter-house, I discovered him lying stretched out upon the pavement stiff and dead. One of the boys stood bending over him in an attitude expressive of the deepest sorrow. The youth saw I compassionated him, and murmured out in a low desponding voice: "This poor bird followed me all the way from my home in Alemtejo—a long distance from Batalha. He was the joy of my life, and dearly loved by my mother, who is dead. I shall never see her again in this world, nor hear the cheering cry of this our fond household bird, calling me up in the morning; he will receive no more crumbs from my hand—he will keep faithfully by my side no longer. I have no one now in this grand place who loves me!" And he burst into a flood of bitter tears, and it was a relief to my own heart—a great relief—to join in his mourning.

The Prior, who happened to come up at the moment, could not at first imagine what had affected me; but when I pointed to the boy and the lifeless stork, he entered into my feelings with his characteristic benevolence, and spoke words of comfort to the poor weeping child, with such true parental kindness as seemed to assure him he had still a friend. Touched to the heart, the boy fell on his knees, and kissed the pavement and his stork at the same time. I left him extending his arms to the good Prior in an act of supplication which I learnt afterwards had not been treated with cold indifference.

And now the Prior, with his wonted solemn and courteous demeanour, offering to be himself my guide to the mausoleum of Don Emanuel, we traversed a wilderness of weeds,—this part of the conventual precincts being much neglected,—and entered a dreary area, surrounded by the roofless, unfinished cluster of chapels, on which the most elaborately sculptured profusion of ornaments had been lavished, as often happens in similar cases, to no very happy result. I cannot in conscience persuade myself to admire such deplorable waste of time and ingenuity—"the quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles" of a corrupt, meretricious architecture; and when the good Prior lamented pathetically the unfinished state of this august mausoleum, and almost dropped a tear for the death of Emanuel its founder, as if it had only occurred a week ago, I did not pretend to share his affliction; for had the building been completed according to the design we are favoured with

by that dull draughtsman Murphy, most preciously ugly would it have been;—ponderous and lumpish in the general effect, exuberantly light and fantastic in the detail, it was quite a mercy that it was never finished. Saxon crinklings and cranklings are bad enough; the preposterous long and lanky marrow-spoon-shaped arches of the early Norman, still worse; and the Moorish horse-shoe-like deviations from beautiful curves, little better.

I have often wondered how persons of correct taste could ever have tolerated them, and batten on garbage when they might enjoy the lovely Ionic so prevalent in Greece, the Doric grandeur of the Parthenon, and the Corinthian magnificence of Balbec and Palmyra. If, however, you wish to lead a quiet life, beware how you thwart established prejudices. I began to perceive, that to entertain any doubts of the supreme excellence of Don Emanuel's scollops and twistifications amounted to heresy. Withdrawing, therefore, my horns of defiance, I reserved my criticisms for some future display to a more intelligent auditor, and chimed in at length with the Prior's high-flown admiration of all this filigree, and despair for its non-completion; so we parted good friends. My Arabian was brought out, looking bright and happy; I bade a most grateful adieu to the Prior and his attendant swarm of friars and novices, and before they had ceased staring and wondering at the velocity with which I was carried away from them, I had reached a sandy desert above a mile from Batalha.

Night was already drawing on—the moon had not yet risen—a dying glow, reflected from the horizon above the hills, behind which the sun had just retired, was thrown over the whole landscape. "Era già l' hora"—it *was* that soothing, solemn hour, when by some occult, inexplicable sympathy, the interior spirit, folded up within itself, inclines to repel every grovelling doubt of its divine essence, and feels, even without seeking to feel it, the consciousness of immortality.

The dying glow had expired; a sullen twilight, approaching to blackness, prevailed: I kept wandering on, however, not without some risk of being soon acquainted with the mysteries of a future world; for had not my horse been not only the fleetest, but the surest of foot of his high-born tribe, he must have stumbled, and in dangerous places, for such

abounded at every step. As good fortune would have it, all the perils of the way were got over; the grand outline of the colossal monastery and its huge church emerged from the surrounding gloom; innumerable lights, streaming from the innúmerable casements, cast a broad gleam over the great platform, where my Lord Almoner and his guests were walking to and fro, enjoying the fresh evening air, and waiting my return, they were pleased to say, with trembling anxiety.

The first question I was asked upon entering the grand illuminated saloon was, how I had fared, and whether I did not feel half-dead for want of refreshment. "We, for our parts," exclaimed my Lord Abbot, "have been the happiest of the happy: your great Simon has surpassed even my expectations. And now, to another proof of his transcendent skill,—now to supper."

NINTH DAY.

June 11*th.*—Great were the lamentations in Alcobaça when the hour of our departure arrived,—a voice of wailing scarcely equalled in Rama, when Rachel wept for her lost children. Here, I am perfectly convinced, that had my Lord Abbot been permitted, like spiritual lords in our own country, to avow the legal paternity of a dozen brats, he would sooner have spared the whole treasure than have lost the advice and exertions of a being he venerated above all others without any exception—a matchless cook. It was a cruel separation: the artist himself, who had a susceptible heart, as well as a hand gifted with the most exquisite sauce-making sensibilities, was far from being callous to the raptures of such a discriminating gourmand as the ruler of Alcobaça. To remain in this holy place, to quit my service, I verily believe never entered the head beneath his milk-white betasselled cook-cap; but he was visibly moved by the rapturous eulogies, still more perhaps by the generous presents I suspect he had received: he saw with great commiseration how acutely the Lord Abbot felt his departure. Pity, we all know, melts the heart to love, and love full often to devotion; so, when we repaired, one and all, to take a parting mass before setting

out on our journey, Monsieur Simon, though little given to demonstrations of piety, fell to thumping his breast with such vehemence, that I could not resist saying to him as we came out of church, "Simon, my Lord Abbot seems to have quite re-converted you; you are becoming astonishingly religious."—"Ah, Monsieur," said he, "on le sera, à moins; Monseigneur rend la religion si aimable."

I thought now, as the equipages, horses, etc., were all marshalled before the grand entrance, we were actually ready to set out. No such thing: the Grand Prior of Aviz, taking me aside for a moment, whispered in my ear that he had still a few words of great importance in store for my Lord Almoner, and begged me to cast another look at my favourite portrait of St. Thomas of Canterbury whilst he delivered them.

Calling his colleague of St. Vincent's, they both entered a private room of audience adjoining the hall of pictures, from which my Lord Almoner had not yet stirred; and notwithstanding the doors had been immediately closed, I heard a loud storm of indistinct but angry words approaching to tempest, the exact import of which it is not in my power to reveal, supposing I had the inclination; but I learned afterwards (though rather vaguely) from one of the Prior of St. Vincent's confidants, that they related to certain mysteries, certain despotic imprisonments, certain grotto-like communications, * between this sacred asylum and another not less monastic, though tenanted by the fairer portion of holy communities—the daughters of prayer and penitence.

Providence, that tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and does kind things now and then to pets and favourites, was not totally ungracious to my Lord Almoner upon this occasion.

* The lively and intelligent Miss Pardoe's charming description of her visit to this famous convent, subsequent to the predatory incursion of the French, and previous to its final desecration by their imitators, the modern Portuguese, cannot be too warmly commended. She paints the supreme beauty of the young monk she caught a peep at (p. 77), and who manifested himself more fully (see p. 89) in a fervid and animated style, which does credit to the discriminating eye of the fair and susceptible authoress. Her hints (p. 100) of a subterranean road from the monastery of Alcobaça to a Bernardine nunnery in the neighbourhood, are far more palpable than any I can pretend to have received. They afford the finest play to the imagination. We immediately assign the handsome monk as beautiful a partner: and the picture becomes complete.

Had it not, by directing the semi-inquisitorial visit of the two prelatical missionaries, given his right reverence of Alcobaça's thoughts serious occupation, they might have dwelt far more painfully upon the departure of his beloved Simon: the sharp edge of his afflictions in this particular was taken off by the reflections which the late stormy conference had inspired.

When he came forth to accompany us to our carriages, as the rules of courtesy demanded, I observed a marked change in his deportment and countenance; there were no longer those sunny smiles, those cooings and chucklings, which had greeted my revered companions upon their arrival. A sullen, sulky gloom—a but half-subdued expression of anger pervaded his every look and gesture: coldly and formally, therefore, did we take our leave. Not above half of the community were drawn out in complimentary array, and that half looked strange and suspicious, as if they conjectured something had happened unpleasant and awkward. The two fathers deputed to attend us to Pedraneira, got into one of their heavy conventual vehicles, and, in their capacities of conductors, led the van. I looked back as we drove off; and there stood my Lord Almoner, with his eyes fixed on the pavement, before the grand portal, immovable, and as if he had been turned to stone.

The Grand Prior of Aviz having something very confidential to discuss with his secretary, begged me to excuse his accompanying me in my carriage: the Prior of St. Vincent's took his place; an exchange I had no cause to complain of, his conversation being so full of hilarity and life. This flow of cheerful good spirits did not, however, carry him beyond the limits of the most perfect discretion: not a syllable that had the slightest reference to pains or pleasures below ground escaped his lips—not the smallest hint—no, not a breath.

All attempts to gain information upon this curious point proving fruitless, we praised fine weather and fine prospects, and deprecated bad roads. We had no occasion, however, to do so; for scarcely had we turned the angle of one of the vast walled inclosures belonging to the convent, and expected to sink into some frightful rut or sandy furrow, when an immense body of well-clothed peasants, with their strong bright tools slung over their sturdy shoulders, met us with loud *vivas*, and the tranquillizing assurance that the whole way to Pedraneira

had been smoothed by their exertions: so we rolled along over firm gravel and compact heath-fagots most delightfully.

We soon reached the banks of my favourite river, and crossed over a very picturesque-looking bridge, without parapets, to its opposite shore—a vast and dreary plain. We were beginning to experience the effects of heat rather oppressively, when we entered a forest of pine, and felt much invigorated by fragrant, genial breezes,—shade was out of the question, most of the trees being tall and sapless.

In one of the least frequented parts of this superannuated forest, the career of our caravan was suddenly arrested by a most imposing cocked-hatted personage, booted up to the chin, like West's heroes in his picture of the Battle of the Boyne, bestriding a manéged horse, decked out in all the pride of burnished pistol and gold-laced holster.

This most consequential of equerries, with as much solemnity as if he had been reading a state proclamation, invited us, in the name of his mistress, a lady of high caste and importance, to screen ourselves from the meridian heats in her quinta hard by; a most blessedly shady place, in which she had congregated, I verily believe, half the birds in the country—those least in repute, such as kites, owls, and buzzards, not excepted.

My Lord of Aviz was still too deeply engaged in confidential discourse with his secretary to much relish making a halt and getting out of his carriage; but the Prior of St. Vincent's and myself were perfectly disposed to accept the invitation, having learnt, during our course of Alcobaça gossip, too many curious particulars about this eminent lady-patroness of the feathered tribe, not to feel extremely curious to be admitted into the penetralia of the asylum she afforded them; a favour rarely granted, and which sprang most probably out of a strong curiosity to see and fondle my beloved Arabian, not my own dear self—her most excellent ladyship professedly not caring one pip of an orange for strangers of any description or quality, unless they were blessed with four feet, or a natural mantle of feathers.

Preceded by the right pompous and fustified equerry, we diverged from the mended track into an avenue of dwarfish cork-trees, leading straight to a lofty wall, which extended far to the right and left of a grand massive Tuscan gateway. The wide space before this stately entrance exhibited the

refreshing sight of marble troughs brimful of the clearest water; heaps of oats and barley, amply sufficient to supp the wants of our mules; and panniers of bread and oranges, under very substantial canvas awnings.

My reverend companions, as in duty bound, went immediately to offer their homage to the bird-queen; but I begged to be excused for the moment, promising that as soon as my Arabian had been refreshed and brightened up by a good rubbing, I would lead him myself to the foot of the throne of these dominions. Having gained this respite, the whole party dispersed as seemed best in their eyes, and I entered perfectly alone the deeply shaded inclosure—without exception one of the strangest scenes of fairy-land ever conjured up by the wildest fancy.*

As far as the eye could stretch, extended a close bower of evergreens, myrtle, bay, and ilex, not to mention humble box, lofty, broad, and fragrant; on either side, arches of verdure most sprucely clipped, opened into large square plats of rare and curious flowers; and in the midst of each of these trim parterres, a fountain inclosed within a richly-gilded cage, containing birds of every variety of size, song, and plumage; paroquets with pretty little flesh-coloured beaks, and parrots of the largest species, looking arch and cunning, as they kept crackling and grinding walnuts and filberts between their bills as black as ebony.

In one of these inclosures I noticed an immense circular basin of variegated marble, surrounded by a gilt metal balustrade, on which were most solemnly perched a conclave of araras and cockatoos. Their united screechings and screamings upon my approach gave the alarm to a multitude of smaller birds, which issued forth in such clouds from every leaf and spray of these vaulted walls of verdure, that I ran off as if I had committed sacrilege, or feared being transformed by art-magic into a biped completely rigged out with beak, claws, and feathers.

* This fine, trim garden was suffered to fall into total ruin, and its feathered inhabitants were dispersed and destroyed, upon the death of their mistress, which occurred about ten months after the period of my visit. The French armies in their devastating marches and countermarches through Portugal, completed the work of desolation, by cutting down the pine-forest, and grubbing up even the very roots for fuel.

The strange green light which faintly pervaded the closely-bowered alleys—the aromatic odour universally diffused—the rustle of wings, the chirping and twittering above my head and on every side of me, was so completely bewildering and magical, that I almost doubted whether ever again I should be permitted to emerge into common life or common daylight. The soft, perfumed, voluptuous atmosphere of this seemingly enchanted garden, induced a languor and listlessness to creep over me I scarcely ever felt before.

Just as I was giving way to this gentle indolence, and had sunk down by the marble basin soothed by the bubblings of its little quiet jet-d'eau, I heard the heavy tramp of the solemn equerry,—and there he was true enough. "Be pleased, sir," said he, making a bow which the stiffest and most formal dancing-master of the days of Louis the Fourteenth would have gloried in,—"be pleased to comply with the urgent request of my Lord Prior of Aviz, who is waiting with impatience to have the honour of presenting you to my most illustrious and most excellent mistress."

"Oh!" answered I, "by all means: nothing less than the attractions of your most illustrious and most excellent lady's feathered favourites could have detained me from her presence —pray lead me to it."

The way was not long, but most delightful, under a continued arbour of exotic plants, looking as healthful as if they had been quite at home in Portugal—born and bred there for centuries. On either side, more flower-beds, and more birds, some at liberty and some in cages.

The house itself, at which we arrived in due course, though of an extent quite remarkable, was far from presenting a palace-like appearance, being in height only one story. Its verandas, however, commanded respect: they were extremely spacious, paved and balustraded with marble.

Under the terraces they supported, were offices innumerable, not unlike rabbit-burrows in the realm of Brobdingnag, out of, and into which, were continually creeping a great number of tawny-coloured menials, very slightly clothed indeed, all busily engaged in tending the feathered race committed to their charge: for half these burrows, or arched chambers, or whatever we please to call them, were closed with light trellises of wire, forming, after all, no very pleasant aviaries. Certain most

horribly discordant screechings, which pierced my ears every now and then, seemed to indicate that the birds of the establishment were not so happy or judiciously governed as their sovereign mistress imagined—the case of subjects in most dominions.

On the lowest step of a grand flight of steps leading up to the principal veranda, stood three young gentlemen, aged fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen years, the nephews of the great lady, as like one to the other as if they had been not only twins, but triplets; all sleek, and smooth, and sallow; all dressed in obsolete court-dresses of blue and silver tissue, each with his powdered hair in a silken bag, each with his little cut-steel-hilted sword, and each with a little abdominal bulge that promised in the course of a very few years to become a paunch of considerable dignity. In close attendance upon these hopeful youths, were a stripling page, a half-crazed buffoon, an ex-Jesuit, and a dwarf; personages indispensable to a noble and well-constituted Portuguese establishment. Down went their heads the moment I drew near, and down went mine to the very earth in return for so much courtesy.

We ascended the steps all together right lovingly, the three youths marching hand-in-hand. Nothing could exceed the decorous behaviour of these sweet young gentlemen; it did honour to their preceptor, who had brought them up in the most commendable fear of the devil and of taking birds' nests; —the latter, of all crimes, was esteemed the most heinous in those dominions.

Independently of my fondness for brute animals, I am not unapt, chameleon-like, to take the colour of what happens to pass around me. It might be supposed, therefore, that I entered fully into the fashion of the place, and expressed my fondness and admiration of every species of bird it had pleased God in His infinite goodness to create, with enthusiasm. So disposed, and in this blessed trim, I entered the grand saloon of the great lady's residence. Her excellency was seated at its upper end in a high-backed wicker chair, stuck close to the wall. Seven or eight old hags, of a most forbidding aspect, all in black, and all more sincerely bearded, I make no doubt, than the Countess Trifaldi's attendants, were ranged to the right and left, on narrow benches; forming one of the ugliest displays of living tapestry my eyes had ever encountered.

The two Priors, who, to their no great delight, one may easily imagine, formed part and parcel of this odious assembly, had reserved a wicker chair, the coolness of which was completely neutralized by a red velvet cushion, for the stranger—the unhappy stranger, who felt already quite sufficiently annoyed and sweltered.

As soon as we had exchanged an affinity of salutations, and several capacious golden snuff-boxes had gone their rounds with as much regularity as the planets, four antiquated damsels entered the presence, bearing trays, heaped high with candied apricots and oranges, and, still sweeter than all the sweetmeats ever confectionized, a preparation of the freshest eggs ever laid, with the richest sugar ever distilled from the finest canes ever grown in the Brazils for private consumption under the most skilful management.

To these succeeded another entrée of ci-devant young women, who presented us, upon embossed silver salvers, goblets of cut glass, containing the coldest and purest water.

Right opposite to where we sat, formally marshalled all of a row, the young fidalgos and their preceptor, who had enlisted Dr. Ehrhart, Franchi, and the two Priors' secretaries into their ranks, were seated on stools, not in the least superior either in shape or dimensions to those used for milking in the homeliest bartons of our own dear farming country.

It was some time before any sounds, except the whirring and whizzing of enormous cockchafers, and the flirting of fans almost as large as the vans of a windmill, were audible. At length the great lady broke silence, by asking me whether we had any birds in England: to which, rising from my chair, I replied, with a low obeisance, that, thanks be to God, we were blessed with an immense number.

"Indeed!" rejoined her excellency; "I thought your country too cold to allow them, sweet dears, to build their nests and enjoy themselves."

"Yes," observed the Jesuit, "the climate of your island must be very bitter. Camoens, whose authority none can dispute, calls it

> 'A grande Inglaterra che de neve
> Boreal sempre abunda'" (Canto 6, stanz. 42).

"Which being undoubtedly the case," continued the bird-

queen, "that great number you boast of must be imported: indeed, I understood as much from an old servant of my father's, who made a fortune by dealing in Canary-birds, and taking them to your great town, where you can hardly distinguish night from day, as he told me. But what will not the lure of gain make us submit to? He was continually resorting to that black place with his living wares (how I pity them!), and, to be sure, he gained sufficient, though he almost coughed his lungs out, to buy a nice quinta in my neighbourhood. He is an excellent judge of everything that concerns birds; knows how to treat them in moulting-time, which few do; and for the sagacity with which he discovers an incipient pip, and stops its progress, I may venture to affirm, from long experience, he has no equal. But tell me fairly, most estimable Englishman, have you any native birds in your island?"

"Yes, Madam," was my triumphant reply, "we have; one in particular—seldom seen, but often heard—the cuckoo."

I had scarcely pronounced that name, when an exact imitation of its well-known sound burst forth from Franchi and the buffoon, who was standing behind his stool, to the high glee of the young gentlemen, their page and dwarf, and the evident dismay of her sublime ladyship and her hags in waiting. They looked as if they could have pinched us all as sharply as the snuff in their ample boxes. In short, surprise and anger at Franchi's want of decorum, and a suspicion, perhaps, of being what we call quizzed, in our vernacular slang, began to manifest itself; when the solemn equerry announced, with his wonted solemnity, that our carriages were in waiting, and my Arabian at the door, ready to receive the honour of a caress from his most illustrious and excellent mistress.

Overjoyed at this intelligence, the two Priors and myself, all heartily tired of our formal sitting, rose up without a moment's delay; so did the great lady, and her train of hags and dismal damsels, following each other one by one. As soon as this dolorous procession reached the gateway, a great number of gigantic dark-brown umbrellas were spread forth, and under their deep shade my astonished courser, with his fine arched neck held down by a couple of grooms, was patted in succession by the lank, cold fingers of the bird-queen and her antiquated attendants; then followed as many curtseys, and as low as the dry stiff knees that performed them could

contrive to drop; and the Grand Prior of Aviz signifying that he had no further occasion for the attendance of his confidential secretary, I got into his dormeuse, ordered my Arabian to follow, and bade, I hope and trust, an eternal adieu to this region of screaming birds, clipped hedges, and sour-visaged old women.

It was some time before we cleared the walls of these bird-ridden dominions, a great deal more extensive than I apprehended. Our route, distinctly marked out by its recent mendings, led us across a plain in the highest state of cultivation, forming a most agreeable contrast to the ragged weather-beaten forest and pompous idle inclosure we had left behind. Here every object smiled; here every rood of land was employed to advantage, the Lombard system of irrigation being perfectly understood and practised. Every cottage, apparently the abode of industrious contentment, had its well-fenced garden richly embossed with gourds and melons, its abundant water-spout, its vine, its fig-tree, and its espalier of pomegranate.

The peasantry, comfortably clad in substantial garments, looked kindly and unenviously at our splendid caravan, because their hearts were expanded by good treatment, their granaries amply stored, their flocks numerous and healthy, and their landlords, the rich monks of Alcobaça, neither griping nor tyrannical. When the Prior of Aviz stopped to converse with these good people, which he frequently did, and inquired with his usual affable benignity, "Who taught you to till your land so neatly? to manure it with so much judgment? to raise such crops of grain? to spare your cattle all forced oppressive labour? to treat their young with so much gentleness?" the answer was prompt and uniform,—"Our indulgent masters and kind friends, the monks of the royal monastery." *

* The revenue of this royal monastery, at the period of my excursion to it, considerably exceeded 24,000*l.*, and the charities such wealth enabled the monks to dispense were most ample, and judiciously applied. The traces of John the Fifth's munificence were then visible in all their freshness and lustre. Since those golden days of reciprocal good-will and confidence between the landlord and the tenant, the master and the servant, what cruel and arbitrary inroads have been made upon individual happiness! What almost obsolete oppressions have been revived under new-fangled, specious names! What a cold and withering change, in short, has been perpetrated by a well-organized system of spoliation, tricked out in the plausible garb of philosophic improvement and general utility!

The pleasure my excellent friend received from this communication beamed forth from his ingenuous countenance, as he noted down the result of his inquiries on his tablets; a set-off, perhaps, in his opinion, to the strange mysterious report he had received of certain unedifying frailties. Whatever snares of the evil one my kind hosts of Alcobaça may have fallen into beneath ground, few communities ever conferred more solid benefits upon its surface to all their dependants.

Very different were the replies to our queries about the great lady: shrugs of the shoulder, and shakings of the head, gave us to understand most plainly, that, as far as her territorial influence extended,—luckily small in comparison with that of the great convent,—it was of a nature more blighting than genial, less charitable than oppressive. And as to her birds, they were a flagrant nuisance—whole flights of her doves, parrots, kites, finches, and thrushes being allowed to commit, with the most perfect impunity, every species of depredation best suited to their habits and propensities.

We were all so enchanted with these scenes of rural delight and joy, that we ordered our carriages not to be driven along too rapidly. We had to pass the river again and again over the same sort of ruinous bridges as we had met with in the immediate vicinity of Alcobaça. My revered companion could not repress sensations of terror as we jolted up and down steep arches unprotected by any parapet—sensations which the most fervid exhortations on my part to put faith in Saint Anthony could not subdue; so out he trundled into all the dust and offal of the road.

After not less than three or four of these rather dangerous transits, we mounted a heathy, pastoral hill, browsed by goats, and met a long string of female peasants, bearing offerings of various kinds to Our Lady of Nazarè; and presently the sanctuary, to which they were going in pilgrimage, discovered itself on the brow of a craggy eminence shelving down to the Atlantic.

Much praise cannot in truth be lavished upon this edifice, which is neither considerable nor picturesque; but the colours of the wide unlimited ocean, so pure, so vivid, so beautifully azure, made up for all other deficiencies, and, joined to the reviving freshness of the sea-breeze, gave my spirits the most

delightful and animated flow. Gay, agile, and buoyant, I leaped out of the carriage the moment it stopped, and was immediately received into the arms and garlic-scented embrace of the two aged fathers, our harbingers, who had preceded us to Pedraneira.

This most opulent farm-mansion, the capital of the conventual domains in these quarters, had very much the air of an Oriental caravanserai, with stables for mules, and courts surrounded with arches, castellated granaries, and vaulted chambers, incrusted with clean glossy tiles, by no means indifferently painted with scriptural and legendary subjects. In the largest and coolest of these apartments we were regaled with a magnificent banquet of fish, caught near the rocks of Peniche, and reckoned the best upon the whole line of the coast.

Being a fast-day, except a few hashes of pork for heretics, savoury as the flesh-pots of Egypt, nothing unorthodox was served up. Dr. Ehrhart, however, partook of every ragoût set before him indiscriminately, to the scandal of our hosts, the monks and their attendants. All the rest of the company having made their election, stuck to fish with true Catholic propriety.

Our repast quickly despatched, and the aged fathers most kindly thanked and most willingly dismissed from their attendance,—for, to say truth, they were not only intolerably effluvient but inveterately prosy,—we made haste to set forth in order to reach the Caldas before night. As long as we continued on the shore enjoying the vast marine prospect and the unceasing sound of the waves, nothing could be pleasanter; but when we entered an almost endless ravine, its banks entirely covered with the strong healthy flowers of the *Papaver corniculatum*, our progress was slow and tedious. To this ravine succeeded another, diversified by a more agreeable sort of vegetation—the yellow lupin in all its fragrance.

At some distance we saw a Moorish castle, standing proudly on an insulated eminence, presenting a grand mass: it bears also a grand name, Alfagiraõ.* This picturesque object, the

* Tradition informs us that it was at this castle, which, from a distance at least, looks magnificently picturesque, that the good King Don Deniz sometimes held his splendid and opulent court. He was husband to St. Isabel, one of the purest gems of the Roman calendar. From this virtu-

stillness and soft hues of evening, and the perfume of the lupins, were circumstances too pleasing not to make us regret our arrival at the Caldas with quite sufficient light to distinguish all its ugliness ;—its dull monotonous houses, with their coarse green window-blinds and shutters flapping to and fro in the dusty breeze ; and its heavy verandas, daubed over with yellow ochre, and striped in places with blue and red, in patterns not unworthy of Timbuctoo or Ashantee.

In my eyes, the whole of this famous stewing-place wore a sickly unprepossessing aspect. Almost every third or fourth person you met was a quince-coloured apothecary, accoutred like a courtier on his march to the drawing-room, and carrying many a convenient little implement in a velvet bag, as pompously as if he had been a lord chancellor ; and every tenth or twelfth, a rheumatic or palsied invalid, with his limbs all atwist, and his mouth all awry, being conveyed to the baths in a chair. You could hardly move without running your head against the voluminous wig of some medical professor, and hearing the formidable stump of his gold-headed cane.

The news of the advent of a great German doctor, ex-physician to the household of his ex-majesty the most Christian King, soon spread itself throughout the Caldas ; and we had not set our feet on the hot flag-stones of this physical emporium above five or six minutes, before a deputation of the faculty arrived. These sages came on purpose to introduce themselves to Dr. Ehrhart, and entreat the honour of his company on a professional tour to their principal patients. His account of the woeful condition and appearance of the wretched invalids in their respective tubs and cisterns, related in Alsatian French, sound Latin, and broken Portuguese, was most original.

"I found many of them," said the indignant doctor, "with galloping pulses, excited almost to frenzy by the injudicious application of these powerful waters, and others with scarcely any pulses at all. The last will be quiet enough ere long ; and considering what dreadful work these determined Galenists

ous and exemplary Queen descended the less saintly Constance of Castile, Duchess of York. The accounts given by chroniclers of the wealth and prosperity of Don Deniz, the successful impulse he gave to agriculture, and the quantity of gold extracted under his auspices from the sands of the Tagus, appear incredible in our days of almost universal scepticism.

drive amongst them, with their decoctions, and juleps, and spiced boluses, and conserve of mummy, and the devil knows what, I expect a general gaol-delivery must speedily take place, and the souls of these victims of exploded quackeries be soon released from their wretched bodies, rendered the worst of prisons by a set of confounded bunglers."

Never shall I forget the indignant scowl my angry doctor cast upon the contemners of simple and vegetable medicine. His ebullitions of wrath remained unpacified till he had swilled down the contents of an ample carafe of wine, diluted with only a very few drops of water, accompanied by a platter of those savoury bulbs which geese are so often stuffed with in England, for the express purpose, he openly avowed, of decreasing flatulence, and expelling the prince of the air and all his satellites. I thought the Prior of St. Vincent's would never have ceased laughing at this species of exorcism. The Portuguese have in general a strong relish for coarse practical jokes; and I am far from pretending that this one was not most decidedly of the number.

The master and mistress of the large rambling habitation assigned to us, thought proper to light up with their own hands, all the tapers in the Bohemian glass sconces and chandeliers of the barn-like saloon on their ground-floor. Such a glare, equal at least to that of a ridotto in a second-rate Italian town, was as sure to excite notice and attract passengers, as a flaming candle every moth and father-long-legs in its neighbourhood. We were, therefore, in no want of company.

Our tea-table, which we had prudently established as far beyond the influence of Dr. Ehrhart's regale as possible, was soon surrounded by all the fashion not under immediate medical restraint that happened to be at the Caldas: old buckram officers, not much the wiser for having served under the Count de la Lippe; pot-bellied fidalgos, who had not yet been stewed down to less unseemly proportions; and desembargadors and men of the law, as greedy as sharks, and as heavy as cart-horses.

One of the most ponderous of the set, a personage of some political importance, and a distinguished graduate of the University of Coimbra, was half inclined to turn restive, because I would not sit down by him, and explain in minute

detail some passages in Blackstone's Commentaries about which he was eager of information. Pushing my chair away from this determined bore, he pushed his after me with such vehemence, that a conflict must have ensued, perhaps to my total discomfiture, had not his chair been killed under him; —both back and legs gave way, and down he fell flat on the gritty floor. Everybody's sides in the room shook with laughter —even the spare ribs of the Count de la Lippe's ancient martinet officers.

TENTH DAY.

June 12th.—We have been all cheated at a ferocious rate by one of those harpies called Provedores, who, under the mask of administering justice, and superintending hospitals, and so forth, contrive to divert every little rill of royal beneficence into their own pockets. This knave was so accustomed to the sweets of monopolies, that he bought up half the fowls, turkeys, and provisions in the place, and then dealt them out to our numerous caravan at his own price. I refused seeing this cormorant; which was lucky, as I understood he joins insolence to knavery,—a compound which would have called forth my best manual exertions, occasioned delay, and very probably given but too much employment to Dr. Ehrhart.

It was so delightful a morning,—so temperate, for there were not any clouds—so balsamic, for a slight shower had lately fallen,—that I could not find it in my heart to be out of humour long. We had not left the Caldas in arrear half-an-hour, before we saw Obidos, with its towers and battlemented walls rising above a forest of pines, and connected with the neighbouring hills by a long stretch of aqueduct. These hills being clothed with a thick vegetation of dwarf ilex and myrtle, look at a distance as uniformly green as if covered with turf.

Cercal, where our dinner was prepared, is a pleasant little assemblage of reed-covered sloping sheds and pointed hovels, at the feet of shrubby acclivities. Before the entrance of this aboriginal-looking hamlet, is an irregular lawn, bounded by inclosures with bamboo fences, twined over with convolvuli of various colours, forming a labyrinth of cheerful lanes, through which whole families of turkeys, consequential fathers, bustling mothers, slim aunts, and half-fledged cousins, were wandering

about, clucking, and whistling, and gobbling, with all the well-known volubility of their native language.

Though midday, and in mid-June, the heat was moderate; the sky, of a pale tender blue, inexpressibly serene and beautiful. To breathe the soft air of such a climate is in itself no trifling luxury; it seemed to inspire new life into every vein; and if to those gifts of Nature the blessings of a free government and the refinements of art were added, more philosophy than I am master of would be required not to murmur at the shortness of our existence.

Our road in the evening lay between lofty slopes partially covered with bushes of rosemary and lavender in the fullest bloom. The sun went down behind the chain of hills which form the coast of the sea, just as we reached a quinta belonging to Forjaz, at present Governor of Madeira. As we approached the rich cultivated plains framed in by the hills around Cadafaiz, we heard the country people, men, women, and children, singing hymns to St. Anthony as they returned home from reaping.

Near Carregado we left the high-road to take that of Cadafaiz. The whole country was blazing with fires in honour of to-morrow's festival. I counted above one hundred shining bright amongst the olive-trees; whilst a number of grotesque figures, withered hags, and meagre implings, kept glancing about before them, in the style of those visions the illuminati often contrive to conjure up, to delude and bamboozle their dupes and victims.

At Cadafaiz itself, that most comfortable of rustic manorial mansions, the Prior of St. Vincent's, who had preceded us above an hour in his light chaise, drawn by two potent mules, was waiting our arrival. The Prior of Aviz uttered a hearty "Thank God," as he sunk down in an arm-chair of most ample dimensions. Dr. Ehrhart recommended us all to dilute, after his example, as freely as possible; and Franchi unpacked his pianoforte. Recollections of the Caldas and all its apothecaries, —not to mention its dust, its glare, its bustle, and its onions,— made me value the calm and cleanliness of this retired abode still more highly. Oh the delightful, refreshing change! Were I to live as many years as I have often been wished to do by my good friends the Spaniards, I should not forget how keenly I enjoyed it.

ELEVENTH DAY.

June 13th.—I shook off laziness manfully, not above an hour after sunrise; so did the Grand Prior of Aviz;—an effort, our hospitable host observed, worthy to be classed amongst the choicest of St. Anthony's miracles. Not a member of our caravan but seemed to feel the Saint's benign and holy influence. One would have thought it pervaded the very atmosphere; for even Dr. Ehrhart—no ardent devotee—desired to join our solemn pilgrimage to the Franciscan convent, on the summit of an exceedingly high hill, where the grand mass of the day was to be celebrated. The good doctor having promised not to stop our procession by getting out of his vehicle and botanizing by the road-side, we set forth, after a slight breakfast, and wound our long array up the acclivity by a tedious, serpentine, rugged track.

We had attained a sort of resting-place, not more than one hundred yards beneath the summit, when a stout lubber, dressed in goats' skins, carrying a sickly brat in his arms, bolted forth from between two thorny bushes, looking like one possessed, and bawling out, "A miracle! a miracle! My child was at the point of death, when the Saint appeared to me in a dream, and told me to give it the raspings of a cow-horn: I did—and there you see it is alive and hearty."

Hearty at least were Dr. Ehrhart's expressions of surprise at this most pastoral remedy; he kept repeating "raspings of cow-horn, raspings of cow-horn!" so often, that I beseeched him, for St. Anthony's sake, to remain quiet; and we proceeded, the lout with his brat, having joined the great concourse of people on the top of the hill, still crying out, "A miracle! a miracle!" and I am happy to add, for the honour of faith, my most perfect conviction that not a soul of the crowd—and a great crowd it was—but firmly believed him.

Arrived at length at the point to which we had been tending, I fancied myself suddenly transported to Palestine: a plain perfectly flat and arid presented itself, diversified alone by the low columned arcades and belfries of the convent, inclining to the ruinous, and bearing a strong resemblance in form and tint to the views I have seen of the semi-Gothic chapels and cells at Jerusalem and Nazareth. Scattered all over from one

end to the other of this extensive level (for it stretched out above a mile), were droves of asses, a few mules of superior caste glaringly caparisoned, and peasants without number, of all ages and sexes, sitting in clusters upon the ground, employed as busily in gathering together the fragments of a general repast, as if they had just partaken of some miraculous supply of loaves and fishes.

This was all mighty well, and admirably adapted to prompt a desire of sketching, for nothing could be more picturesque than these varied groups; but the comfort of comforts was to witness how gratefully devout they appeared, how perfectly convinced that they stood under the open eye of the Saint, and that by acting in comformity with his precepts, they might deserve, at the inevitable hour, his efficacious patronage. In the meantime I saw no tokens of riot or intemperance, no brandishing of knives, no drunken disputes or wallowings.

When the bells of the convent gave notice that service was going to begin, the groups that were scattered over the plain rapidly joined together, and moved in one dense body, one vast multitude, six or seven thousand at least, to the wide naked space before the entrance to the church, which, though not inconsiderable in its dimensions, was far too small to contain a twentieth part of so numerous a congregation.

The community, consisting of from thirty to forty monks, all young men, many with features as regular as the fine Grecian heads on the Syracusan medals, but looking pale and attenuated, were standing on the long line of steps. Their superior presented the banner of the Saint to my revered companions, who having saluted it with profound reverence, we entered the church. I looked back from the portal upon the multitude, which extended itself like a sea to a great distance; all silent, all kneeling, all with their moistened and glistening eyes (for many wept through religious fervour) fixed on the illumination which streamed from the high altar, and which appeared to them, I have no doubt, a cheering light, a sacred pharos, shining to conduct them to that haven where the ardent in faith and the contrite in spirit meet their eternal reward.

"Oh!" said the excellent Prior of Aviz to me, as he pressed my hand with parental kindness, "this is a sight which relieves and elevates my heart. How glowing and sincere the piety of

these plain countrymen! how consolatory their firm confidence in protection from above! And yet these warm, ennobling feelings—feelings which raise our nature above the dust—are precisely those the vile sycophants of the evil principle, the blood-stained monsters of France, pant to eradicate. The suppressors of institutions which tend to soothe those lacerating cares humanity is subject to, and to absorb in the glorious prospect of the future the corroding misery of the present, are, in fact, suppressors of happiness,—the delegates of that dread invisible agency, which, under an endless variety of specious masks, is ever in movement, seeking whom and what it may devour."

Not one word had I to say against this reasoning; for how often have I thought myself, that these experiments upon the human mind, to which the Prior of Aviz alluded, are as abhorrent to men of pure and kindly feeling, as those of the hellish Majendie * upon the unoffending animals he submits to the most horrible and lingering torture, and for purposes equally problematical.

The "Ite, missa est" having been pronounced, the Prior of Aviz, trembling with emotion, and evidently much affected, was conducted in procession by the monks to their sacristy, to put on his pontifical vestments, and, next, to the steps before the entrance, where, looking up to the effigy on the banner, again displayed by the superior of the convent, he bestowed, as if immediately delegated by the Saint himself to perform that sacred office, a solemn, heartfelt benediction.

At that moment, when every knee was bent and every head was bowed, the ancient and venerable hymn appointed for this festival, so dear to the natives of Portugal—so often sung by their armies in their proud days of conquest on the eve of going into battle, rose with one accord, as from one heart, from the whole of the vast assemblage. The perfect unison of so many thousand manly voices, mingled with the clearer tones of children and their mothers, filled the summer air with a

* I had copied, for insertion here, a record of these atrocious experiments, which appeared in most of the newspapers of the time, and were even alluded to in Parliament; but, upon reading it over, although it would fully justify the epithet I have bestowed on this keen anatomist, the details are so heart-sickening, so horrible, that I shrink from their further dissemination.

volume of sound more intellectually harmonious than any which ever reached my ear from the artificial efforts of musicians and choristers. Prayer does not always ascend with the greatest fervency from beneath gilded vaults or gorgeous cupolas: it is in the free untainted desert, under Nature's own sky, that man seems to commune more deeply with his God. Impressed with that sentiment, the bare rocks, the scattered stones, the withered turf, ranked higher in my estimation than all the splendours of regal magnificence; and the simple congregation assembled together in this wild and desolate place to thank the Almighty for His blessings, appeared far superior in my eyes to those pharisaic gatherings attracted to church by worldly motives and the parade of idle vanity.

So very thick was the concourse of people, and so profoundly were they affected by the late most solemn benediction, that it was no easy matter for the prelate to pass between their still kneeling groups to regain the sacristy in order to be divested of his heavy cope, the people pressing forwards to kiss his hand in such tides, and with such earnestness, that he felt fatigued and jaded. Nor was his lassitude destined to a speedy termination: he had hardly resumed his customary habiliments, when our egress from the church was absolutely impeded by a procession of young lads, dressed in a style as antique as the Moorish domination in Portugal: some carrying baskets of fruit and corn; some, on an ornamented sledge, an immense mass of wax fashioned into the shape of a gigantic taper; and some, a number of lambs bedecked with ribands and flowers.

I thought, when I saw presented on the steps before the altar these living offerings, not one of which I understood, to my heart's content, was devoted to the knife, but all destined to be reared with care and tenderness—I thought even their bleatings might reach the throne of universal beneficence. We well know how positively the inspired David declares, in one of his Psalms, that the ear of God is open to the supplications of all His creatures, to whom, as well as to us, He has imparted the blessings of light, of sleep, and of nutriment, —"qui dat jumentis escam ipsorum et pullis corvorum invocantibus eum."

When I communicated to my revered friend the feelings which throbbed in my own bosom, and reminded him of the fervid effusion of the prophet king, he replied: "Most entirely

do I sympathise with the holy monarch. Man, in the delusion of pride, may arrogate to himself an exclusive supremacy; but fully persuaded am I, that the same principle of life which animates the wisest and brightest of mankind, pervades the boundless creation in all its forms and branches; and when that principle prompts the cry of distress or the expression of gratitude in the humblest animal, neither pass unheeded by the Divine Creator, nor are they poured forth to Him in vain. These are my own interior sentiments," continued the venerable prelate.—"And they are mine also," I could not repress exclaiming.

At length the procession, after depositing all its offerings, having retired into the secret courts and penetralia of the convent, the crowd began to disperse; a passage was cleared between the remaining groups of the multitude, and we regained our carriages, much to the relief of the Grand Prior, who was experiencing an almost total exhaustion.

What with the sun-rays from above, and the rolling stones below, our descent was not only broiling, but dangerous: many of our mules stumbled, and one fell down dead, half crushing the driver in its fall. The stoppage and confusion this sad accident occasioned in one of the narrowest parts of our perilous track exposed us to scorching heat for half-an-hour. We arrived at last at our cool, shady quarters, as brown as mummies, and as dry as cinders.

The first living objects that met us at the massive portal, surmounted by a huge marble cross, which defends the entrance of the orange orchard immediately around the mansion, were two special couriers in the royal livery, magnificently badged and booted, just arrived with a written mandate from the Prince, summoning the two Priors to an audience to-morrow at the palace of Queluz, precisely at three. They delivered me also a very kind letter of invitation from the Marquis of Anjeja (then lord in waiting) to dine with him at the same hour.

"Really," said our most amiable host, a little ruffled by this peremptory command, "we did not expect a summons to communicate observations upon Alcobaça so soon,—on our way home, too, God bless us! without being allowed time to shake off the dust from our garments, and make ourselves decent and comfortable. But an uncontrollable love of gossip

is inherent in the character of royalty, and as indelible: we have nothing to do but to obey."

So saying, and so sighing, with many an ejaculation from the inmost soul of laziness, both Priors wrote answers to the royal mandate: I did the same to the Marquis of Anjeja, and the couriers departed.

After every comfort and ablution our pleasant retired chambers could afford, we partook of a delicious repast, and of all the blandishments which delicate dishes and iced sherbets could bestow on the willing palate. To these delights succeeded, on the part of the Lord Priors at least, a most comfortable nap, and then a stroll in the long-bowered alleys of the quinta; and then the evening perfume of orange-flowers and jasmine, and the evening song of birds,—music, also, from Franchi, accompanied on the guitar by two novices, who played from their heart and soul most ravishingly,—and then a dance of true Oriental fervour, performed by a chosen band of the morisco-dressed processionists, who had been drawn down, not from heaven, like the Angel to St. Cecilia, but from the convent on the hill; where, I have little doubt, their freaks and gambols were sadly missed, and the temporary deprivation of such amusing frolics heartily regretted.

TWELFTH DAY.

June 14th.—The morning was the very essence of summer —and summer in Portugal, consequently tremendously hot. Such heat was oppressive enough, but the Grand Prior thought early rising still more abominable, and notwithstanding the Prior of St. Vincent's exhortations to set forth whilst any degree of coolness lingered in the atmosphere, there was no persuading him to move before half-past eight.

Being myself pretty well seasoned to meridian excursions, and bronzed all over like a native Portuguese, I set the sun at defiance, mounted my Arabian, and steering my course as directly as was possible without the aid of a compass, traversed the wide expanse of country between Cadafaiz and Queluz;—and a sad dreary expanse it was, exhibiting only now and then a straggling flock, looking pretty and pastoral —a neglected quinta of orange-trees with its decaying garden-

house, the abode of crime or innocence, whichever you like best to fancy—or a half-ruined windmill, with its tattered vans, revolving lackadaisically in the languid and feeble breeze.

Exactly at the hour named, I arrived, not a little ennuied and wearied, at the palace of Queluz. The chaises belonging to the Priors of Aviz and St. Vincent's were waiting before the royal entrance, for both prelates were still closeted with the Prince-Regent. Blessing Heaven that I had nothing to do with the business, whatever it might be, that was in agitation, I gladly took refuge from the intolerable sunshine in the apartments allotted to the lord in waiting;—shabby enough they were, bare as many an English country church, and not much less dingy.

The beings who were wandering about this limbo, or intermediate state, belonged chiefly to that species of living furniture which encumber royal palaces—walking chairs, animated screens, commodes and conveniences, to be used by sovereigns in any manner they like best; men who had little to feed on besides hope, and whose rueful physiognomies showed plainly enough the wasting effects of that empty diet,—weather-beaten equerries, superannuated véadors,* and wizened pages. The whole party were yawning over dusty card-tables.

Making them many low bows, which were returned with equal courtesy, I passed forward into an interior apartment, where the Marquis of Anjeja and his son the Conde de Villaverde were waiting for me, and immediately dinner was served up. Our repast was not particularly distinguished by good cheer or lively conversation.

As soon as it was over, and the motley tribe of attendants who had crowded tumultuously round our table sent about their no business at all, the Marquis observed to me, in a very subdued and rather melancholy tone, that the Prince had been greatly disturbed of late by strange apprehensions and stranger dreams; that his temper was much ruffled, and that something, he could not tell what, bore heavily on his mind. He would have entered, I believe, into further details of still greater importance had not a page called him away to the royal presence.

* A Véador is something less than a Camarista, or chamberlain, and something more than a groom of the bedchamber.

"I shall return in half-an-hour," said he, "and finish what I had to say to you." This half-hour exceeded three quarters, and two quarters added to that; but they passed rapidly, for both the young Conde and myself, oppressed by a warm atmosphere, and lulled by the drone of humble-bees, and the monotonous buzzing of courtiers and lacqueys, in the adjoining apartments, had fallen fast asleep.

When I awoke from this happy state of forgetfulness, one of my servants, who had followed me from Cadafaiz with a change of dress, took me into a room which a principal attendant of the palace had given up to him, and out of which I issued completely renovated, and met the Marquis hastily bearing to me the interesting intelligence, that in the course of the evening, or as soon after nightfall as possible, the Prince-Regent would give me an audience. "In the intervening time," he added, "if you wish to see the curious birds and flowers last sent from the Brazils, the gardens, though accessible of late to very few persons, shall be open to you. Villaverde would most gladly accompany you, but even he has not been in the habit of straying about them for some time past. As to myself, the Prince has a long series of deputations and petitions to receive, and it is my duty to remain near his royal person on these occasions: so pardon my not offering myself as your guide. At the extremity of the avenue you see from these windows, stands a pavilion well worthy your attention, and I rather wish you might principally employ it in examining the paintings and china, till the moment arrives when the Prince will be at leisure to receive you."

I bowed, the Marquis and his son bowed also, and I entered the grand avenue, wondering what in the name of mystery all these precautions could mean. The enigma was not long in meeting with some explanation. A gardener, who had left my service only last year, and was now established prime guardian of carnations and anemones in this regal paradise, advanced towards me with looks of the greatest surprise, and touching the extremities of my garments with his exuberant lips—for he was neither more nor less than a negro—stammered out, "Most excellent sir, by what chance do I see you here, where so few are permitted to enter?"—"By the chance of having the Prince's permission."—"Ah,

sir," continued he, "it is the Princess who reigns here almost exclusively."—"Well," answered I, "her indignation, I hope, will not visit me too severely: here I am, and here I shall continue."

With a low salam in the style of a regular Bostangi, the poor African, not a little confounded, humbly retired, and left me at full liberty to enter the pavilion, whose richly gilded trellised doors stood wide open. Many entertaining objects, arabesque paintings by Costa full of fire and fancy, and mandarin josses of the most supreme and ridiculous ugliness, kept me so well amused that half-an-hour glided away pretty smoothly.

The evening was now drawing towards its final close, and the groves, pavilions, and aviaries sinking apace into shadow: a few wandering lights sparkled amongst the more distant thickets,—fire-flies perhaps—perhaps meteors; but they did not disturb the reveries in which I was wholly absorbed.

"So then," thought I within myself, "the Infanta Donna Carlotta is become the predominant power in these lovely gardens, once so profusely adorned and fondly cherished by the late kind-hearted and saintly king. She is now Princess of Brazil and Princess-Regent; and what besides, Heaven preserve me from repeating!"

Reports, I well knew, not greatly to the good fame of this exalted personage, had been flying about, numerous as butterflies; some dark-coloured, like the wings of the death-head moth, and some brilliant and gay, like those of the fritillaria.

This night I began to perceive, from a bustle of preparation already visible in the distance, that a mysterious kind of fête was going forwards; and whatever may have been the leading cause, the effect promised at least to be highly pleasing. Cascades and fountains were in full play; a thousand sportive *jets-d'eau* were sprinkling the rich masses of bay and citron, and drawing forth all their odours, as well-taught water is certain to do upon all such occasions. Amongst the thickets, some of which received a tender light from tapers placed low on the ground under frosted glasses, the Infanta's nymph-like attendants, all thinly clad after the example of her royal and nimble self, were glancing to and fro, visible one instant, invisible the next, laughing and talking all the while with very musical silver-toned voices. I fancied now and then I heard

gruffer sounds; but perhaps I was mistaken. Be that as it pleases Lucifer, just as I was advancing to explore a dusky labyrinth, out came, all of a sudden, my very dear friend Don Pedro, the young Marquis of Marialva.*

"What! at length returned from Alcobaça," said he, lifting me a foot off the ground in a transport of jubilation; "where is my uncle?"

"Safe enough," answered I, perhaps indiscreetly; "he had his audience five or six hous ago, and is gone home snug to his cushions and *calda da galinha*. I am waiting for my turn."

"Which will not come so soon as you imagine," replied Don Pedro, "for the Prince is retired to his mother's apartments, and how long he may be detained there no one can tell. But in the meanwhile come with me. The Princess, who has learnt you are here, and who has heard that you run like a greyhound, wishes to be convinced herself of the truth of a report she thinks so extraordinary."

"Nothing so easy," said I, taking him by the hand; and we sprang forwards, not to the course immediately, but to an amphitheatre of verdure concealed in the deepest recess of the odoriferous thickets, where, seated in the Oriental fashion on a rich velvet carpet spread on the grass, I beheld the Alcina of the place, surrounded by thirty or forty young women, every one far superior in loveliness of feature and fascination of smile to their august mistress.

"How did you leave the fat waddling monks of Alcobaça?" said her Royal Highness. "I hope you did not run races with them;—but that would indeed have been impossible. There," continued she, "down that avenue, if you like, when I clap my hands together, start; your friend Pedro and two of my donzellas shall run with you—take care you are not beaten."

The avenue allotted for this amusing contest was formed of catalpas and orange trees, and as completely smooth and level as any courser, biped or quadruped, upon whom all the bets in the universe were depending, could possibly desire. The signal given, my youthful friend, all ardour, all agility, and two

* From this mild night, I have been told repeatedly, may be traced the marked predilection of the future Empress-queen for this graceful young nobleman—a predilection about which much has been said and more conjectured.

Indian-looking girls of fourteen or fifteen, the very originals, one would have thought, of those graceful creatures we often see represented in Hindoo paintings, darted forth with amazing swiftness. Although I had given them ten paces in advance, exerting myself in right earnest, I soon left them behind, and reached the goal—a marble stature, rendered faintly visible by lamps gleaming through transparent vases. I thought I heard a murmur of approbation: but it was so kept down, under the terror of disturbing the Queen, as to be hardly distinguishable.

"Muy bien, muy bien," said the Princess in her native Castilian, when we returned to the margin of the velvet carpet upon which she was still sitting reclined, and made our profound obeisances. "I see the Englishman can run,—report has not deceived me. Now," continued her Royal Highness, "let me see whether he can dance a bolero; they say he can, and like one of us: if that be true—and I hope it is, for I abhor unsuccessful enterprises—Antonita shall be his partner, —and she is by far the best dancer that followed me from Spain."

This command had been no sooner issued, than a low, soft-flowing choir of female voices, without the smallest dissonance, without the slighest break,—smooth, well-tuned, and perfectly melodious,—filled my ear with such enchantment, that I glided along in a delirium of romantic delight.

My partner, an Andalusian, as full of fire and animation as the brightest beauties of Cadiz and Seville, though not quite so young as I could have wished her to be, was rattling her castanets at a most intrepid rate, and raising her voice to a higher pitch than was seemly in these regions, when a universal "Hush, hush, hush!" arrested our movements, suspended the harmonious notes of the choir, and announced the arrival of the Marquis of Anjeja.

After a thousand kind and courteous compliments he was pleased to pay me, he begged another thousand pardons of the Princess for having ventured to interrupt her recreations. "But, madam," continued he, "the Prince-Regent has been waiting several minutes for the Englishman, and I leave you to judge whether he has a minute to lose."

Her Royal Highness looked rather blank at this intelligence, and, compassionating my disappointment, held out her hand,

which I kissed with fervour, and three or four of her attendants as many silken handkerchiefs, which I found very convenient in removing those dews which not only the night, but such violent exercise as I had lately taken, occasioned. Panting, and almost breathless, I quitted the enchanted circle with great reluctance.

What a contrast the dark, dull antechambers of the palace presented to that lively and graceful scene! It was in the long state gallery where the Prince habitually receives the homage of the court upon birthdays and festivals,—a pompous, richly-gilded apartment, set round with colossal vases of porcelain, as tall and as formal as grenadiers,—that his Royal Highness was graciously pleased to grant me audience.

He was standing alone in this vast room, thoughtful, it appeared to me, and abstracted. He seemed, however, to brighten upon my approach; and although he was certainly the reverse of handsome, there was an expression of shrewdness, and at the same time benignity, in his very uncommon countenance, singularly pleasing; it struck me that he had a decided look, particularly about the mouth, of his father's maternal ancestors. John the Fifth having married the Archduchess, daughter of the Emperor Charles the Sixth, he had therefore an hereditary claim to those wide-spreading, domineering lips, which so remarkably characterised the House of Austria, before it merged into that of Lorraine.

"Welcome back from Alcobaça!" said his Royal Highness to me, with the most condescending kindness: "I hope your journey was pleasant—how did you find the roads?"

"Not half so bad as I expected, especially upon our return from the great convent, the reverend fathers having summoned all their numerous dependants to mend them with astonishing expedition: the Lord Abbot took care of that."

"He takes excellent care of himself, at least," observed the Prince,—"nobody better. Is it not true that he is become most gloriously corpulent, and fallen passionately in love with the fine French cookery you gave him an opportunity of enjoying?"

I perceived by this sally that the Grand Prior had been a faithful narrator of our late proceedings, as was proved more and more by the following queries.

"You had a stage-play too, had you not? The fathers at

Mafra have often regaled me with performances of a similar nature; and many a hearty laugh have I had at them, and with them, before now. I dare say you must have thought them half out of their senses; their poet particularly, who, I hear, is one of the most ridiculous buffoons, the most impudent blockhead (*tolerao*) in the kingdom. I shall send for him one of these days myself; they say he is highly diverting, and I want something to cheer my spirits. Every despatch from France brings us such frightful intelligence, that I am lost in amazement and horror; the ship of the state in every country in Europe is labouring under a heavy torment,—God alone can tell upon what shore we shall be all drifted!"

With these prophetic words, most solemnly and energetically pronounced, the Prince thought fit to dismiss me, honouring me again with those affable expressions of regard which his excellent heart never failed to dictate. Let me observe, whilst the recollections of the interviews I have had with this beneficent sovereign remain fresh in my memory, that not one of his subjects spoke their native language—that beautiful harmonious language—with greater purity and eloquence than himself. When in his graver moods, there was a promptitude, a facility in his diction, most remarkable: every word he uttered was to the purpose, and came with the fullest force. When he chose to relax,—which he certainly was apt enough to do more than now and then,—a quaint national turn of humour added a jest to his pleasantries, that, upon my entering heart and soul into the idiom of the language, has often afforded me capital entertainment. No one knew how to win popular affection, after its own fashion, more happily than this well-intentioned, single-minded prince. Had it not been for the baneful influence of his despotic consort,—her restless intrigues of all hues, political as well as private,—her wanton freaks of favouritism and atrocious acts of cruelty,—his reign would have gone down to the latest times in the annals of his kingdoms surrounded with a halo of gratitude.

Upon my reaching the great portal of this silent gallery, and fumbling to open its valves,—for this extremity of the apartment was but very feebly illuminated,—the Marquis, who had been giving some orders to somebody of whom I only caught a glimpse, spared me the trouble of further rattlings at locks or door-knobs, and we entered together another shadowy world

—another immense saloon. Here, by the wan light of one solitary lustre, containing but half its complement of yellowish wax tapers drooping with dismal snuffs, I discovered some fifteen or twenty unhappy aspirants to court benefits still loitering and lingering about. The sovereign of Portugal was at this period as completely despotic as the most decided amateur of unlimited monarchy could possibly desire: they who entered these palace regions came with as many hopes of success and fears of the contrary as if they were resorting to a table of hazard. The sovereign, in their eyes, was Chance personified; his decrees for or against you, modestly styled *avisos*, were pieces of advice to the judicial obeyers of his commands, which, if once obtained, were never slighted.

Most of the victims of this system, at this time in this great hall assembled, appeared visibly suffering under the sickness of hope deferred. "Five hours have I been walking up and down, to and fro, to no purpose," said an old General, my very particular acquaintance.—"Is there no chance yet of delivering my memorial into his Royal Highness's own hand?" whispered another veteran, decorated with scars as well as orders.—"None," answered the Marquis: "the Prince is retired for the night, and you had better follow his example."

Had there been more light, we should have been fastened upon by a greater number of petitioners; but, thanks to the pervading gloom, we slipped along half-undiscovered.

Our next movements were directed through an antechamber of large size and much simplicity, for its walls were quite plain, and the roof as unornamented as that of a barn. A few expiring lamps gave me an opportunity of perceiving another assemblage of the votaries of royal favour in some of its shapes, less dignified than the company we had just quitted, but who had been equally eager, and who now were equally exhausted, —country magistrates, sea captains, provincial noblesse, and I know not who besides; some of them, if truth may be spoken, looking more like the *bad* than the *beau* idéal of bandits and bravoes, but what they were in reality, thank God, I am perfectly ignorant. Anjeja paid them no attention as we passed on through their opening ranks: his looks, though not his voice, told me plainly enough,

"Non ragionam di lor,
Ma guarda e passa."

These looks seemed to tell me at the same time that he wished to converse with me in private.

I was tired of close conferences in close apartments; I longed for the refreshing sea-breezes of my quinta on the banks of the Tagus; the very name of which (San Josè de Riba-mar) was music to my ears at this moment. A page announced that my carriages, just arrived from Cadafaiz, were in waiting. This was tantalizing indeed: I would have taken leave of my most obliging Marquis without any very deep regret after all, but he would not let me off so soon as I eagerly desired; he absolutely insisted upon taking me into an interior apartment I had never visited before, where we sat down,—for here, at least, were plenty of chairs and sofas, —and he addressed me with considerable emotion in the following manner:

"You see his Royal Highness is more gloomy than he used to be."

"Upon the whole," answered I, "his spirits are less depressed than I was led to imagine: my friends the Priors seem to have regaled him with many a good story about convents, for he laughed several times at my Lord Almoner's charities of all kinds beginning so comfortably at home."

"Ah!" replied Anjeja, "you little think, notwithstanding this apparent levity, what an accumulated weight of sorrows presses him down: he is the most affectionate of sons, the most devoted; and being such, feels for his mother's sufferings with the acutest poignancy. Those sufferings are frightfully severe, more heart-rending than any words of mine can express. This very evening he knelt by the Queen's couch above two hours, whilst, in a paroxysm of mental agony, she kept crying out for mercy, imagining that, in the midst of a raging flame which enveloped the whole chamber, she beheld her father's image a calcined mass of cinder,—a statue in form like that in the Terreiro do Paco, but in colour black and horrible,— erected on a pedestal of molten iron, which a crowd of ghastly phantoms—she named them, I shall not—were in the act of dragging down. This vision haunts her by night and by day; and should she continue to describe it in all its horrible details again and again to my royal master, I fear his brain will catch fire too. There is a remedy—my relation, her confessor, knows it well—there is a medicine, and of the highest and

most salutary kind—such might be administered—restitutions might be made—infernal acts revoked, and justice rendered. But hitherto the powers of evil—certain demons in the shape of some of Pombal's ancient counsellors, and others equally culpable, though not so old in iniquity, have impeded measures which would conciliate the disaffected, and although they might excite the gibes and murmurs of the disciples of new doctrines, would attach all us, the ancient nobles of the realm, to the House of Braganza more closely than ever. May I ask, has the Prince ever touched upon this subject to you? I think Marialva told me he had, and once in his presence."

I answered, "If he did, it was ambiguously, and with so much slightness that it passed like a fleeting cloud."

After a long pause, during which Anjeja appeared lost in thought, he said to me with the greatest earnestness, "If, at the next audience the Prince may give you, he should pour forth his sorrows for his mother's malady into your bosom,—which I have reason to conjecture he shortly may, for I know that he feels himself towards you affectionately well inclined" (*sumamente affeiçoado*), "remember the kind regard you entertain for our family" (he meant the Noronhas in general, from which great house all the Marialvas are paternally descended), "remember to let it suggest such observations as may further a great and interesting cause. I wish also you would dwell particularly on what the late Archbishop, your devoted friend, may probably have said to you upon this subject. Whatever that may have been, give it the turn we wish, and do not let it lose any charm in the narration."

I could hardly repress a smile at this urgent request to launch forth beyond the exact limits of truth, if not of probability; for I perfectly recollected the good Archbishop's opinions were everything but favourable to the reversal of those attainders. However, I preserved a decorous gravity. I said nothing; but I contrived that my looks should express a disposition to second his wishes the first opportunity of doing so that might present itself.

At this moment, the most terrible, the most agonizing shrieks —shrieks such as I hardly conceived possible—shrieks more piercing than those which rung through the Castle of Berkeley, when Edward the Second was put to the most cruel and tortur-

ing death—inflicted upon me a sensation of horror such as I never felt before. The Queen herself, whose apartment was only two rooms off from the chamber in which we were sitting, uttered those dreadful sounds:—"Ai Jesous! Ai Jesous!" did she exclaim again and again in the bitterness of agony.

I believe I turned pale; for Anjeja said to me, "I see how deeply you are affected: think what the sufferings must be that prompt such cries; think what a son must feel, and such a son as our royal master."

I undoubtedly thought all this, and a great deal more: not only the tears in my eyes, but the faltering of my voice, expressed the intensity of my feelings. The Marquis, far from displeased at the effect produced upon me, embraced me with redoubled kindness. Notwithstanding my entreaties for him to remain in his apartment, he was determined, after I had taken leave, to conduct me to the outward door of the palace; nor did he cease gazing, I was afterwards told, upon the carriage which bore me away, till the sound of the wheels grew fainter and fainter, and even the torches which were borne before it became invisible.

THE END.